



BEAR REPORT

A NEWSPAPER DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO THE
CHICAGO BEARS AND THE NFL.

VOL. 15 NO. 1

JANUARY 1990

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GENERAL MANAGER

John Weishar

MANAGING EDITOR

Michael Polzin

ADVERTISING SALES

Ronald Royle

Cathy Hanson

112 Market St., Sun Prairie, WI 53590

608/837-5161

MEMBER

Professional Football Publications Assoc.

National Advertising

Randy McMillen

P.O. Box 97

Berea, OH 44107-25C3

216/234-4285

National Marketing Rep.

Parkin Promotions

John Parkin

President

5165 Thornbark Dr.

Hoffman Estates, IL 60194

ROYLE PUBLISHING CO., INC.

Richard L. Royle, President

John Weishar, Publications Manager

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It's almost impossible not to pick a 49er win

How can you go against San Francisco in Sunday's Super Bowl?

They're unbelievable. And there's no question in my mind that Joe Montana is the best quarterback I've ever seen. Maybe it's a combination of everything that makes him so good. His wide receivers are great, the game plans they have for him are great, their offensive line in front of him is great and their defense is great.

DOUG BUFFONE



It seems every time the San Francisco offense gets its hands on the ball, it's going downfield with it. They can run it with Roger Craig and Tom Rathman, they can come back and throw it, and they look like they do it so effortlessly as they cruise down the field. They make it look so easy, but you know better. It's not easy to move the ball against defenses like the Vikings' or the Rams'. But San Francisco always does it.

The 49er defense is aggressive, they hit, they cover, they put a lot into their pass rush, they do it all. And yet, you don't hear a lot

about the San Francisco defense. I think the unit has a lot of respect around the league, but it doesn't have the national notoriety that, say, the Bear defense had.

On the other hand you have Denver, which played a great game against the Browns in the AFC Championship Game. John Elway made some great plays, the running game was there and the defense responded well.

I feel sorry for Denver, because the city is kind of getting on the team about whether the Broncos will just go to the Super Bowl and lose again for the fourth time in four tries. They have the bad luck of going against a team that's probably one of the greatest ever to play in a Super Bowl. It's not that Denver is so bad, but that San Francisco is so good.

Denver will try to give the 49ers a game, though. If Denver can stay away from mistakes and turnovers, it could make the game interesting.

What the Broncos need to do defensively is not let the receivers turn short passing gains into 60- or 70-yard gains. John Taylor and Jerry Rice are capable of doing that. So the Broncos need to concentrate on making the hit after the catch.

Give some respect to the Broncos' defense. This is not the same Denver defense we saw in their two previous Super Bowl appearances. The Broncos are only giving up about 275 yards a game. They're playing defense well. But then again, so was Minnesota and Los Angeles. And Montana carved them up.

Denver also is going to have to score.

John Elway needs to put points on the board. Denver is a big-play team, there's no question about it. The Broncos will need a lot of those to offset San Francisco's offensive machine.

That's the shot Denver has at winning the game. And the Broncos also will need the 49ers to play a little bit below their usual level. But the 49ers have been so consistent all year, I don't know if they're capable of not playing their best in the Super Bowl. It's just scary.

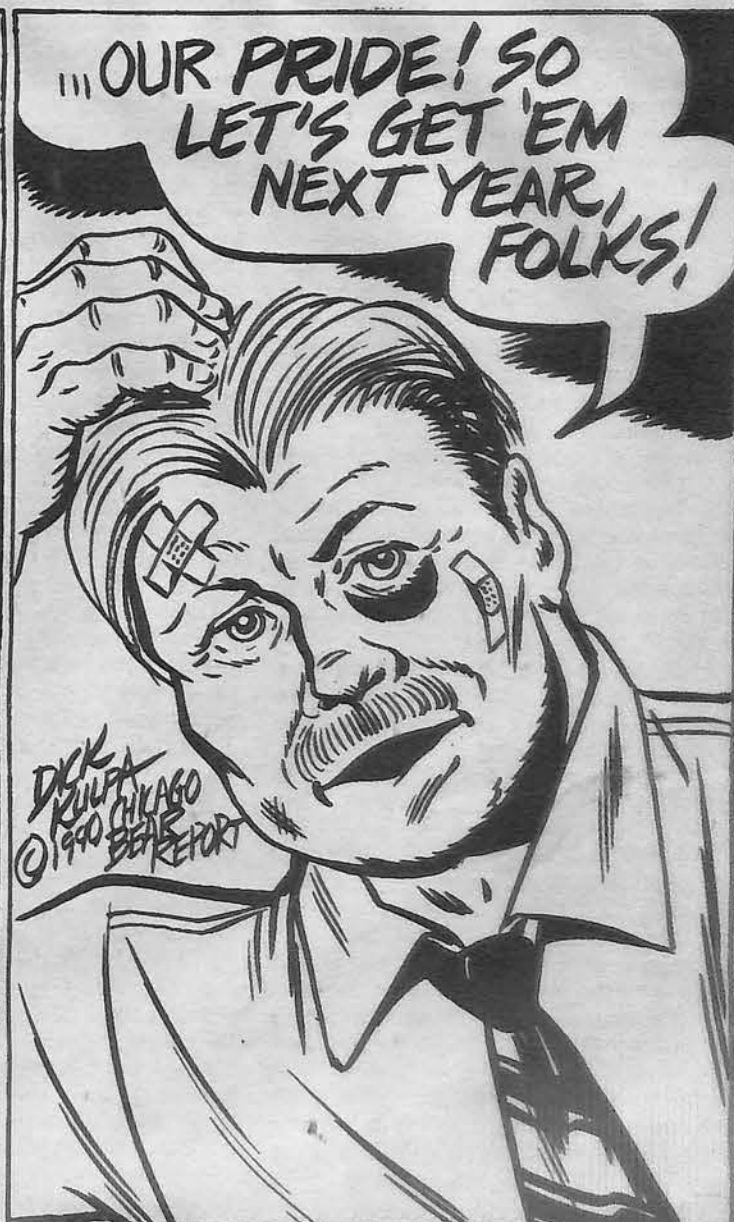
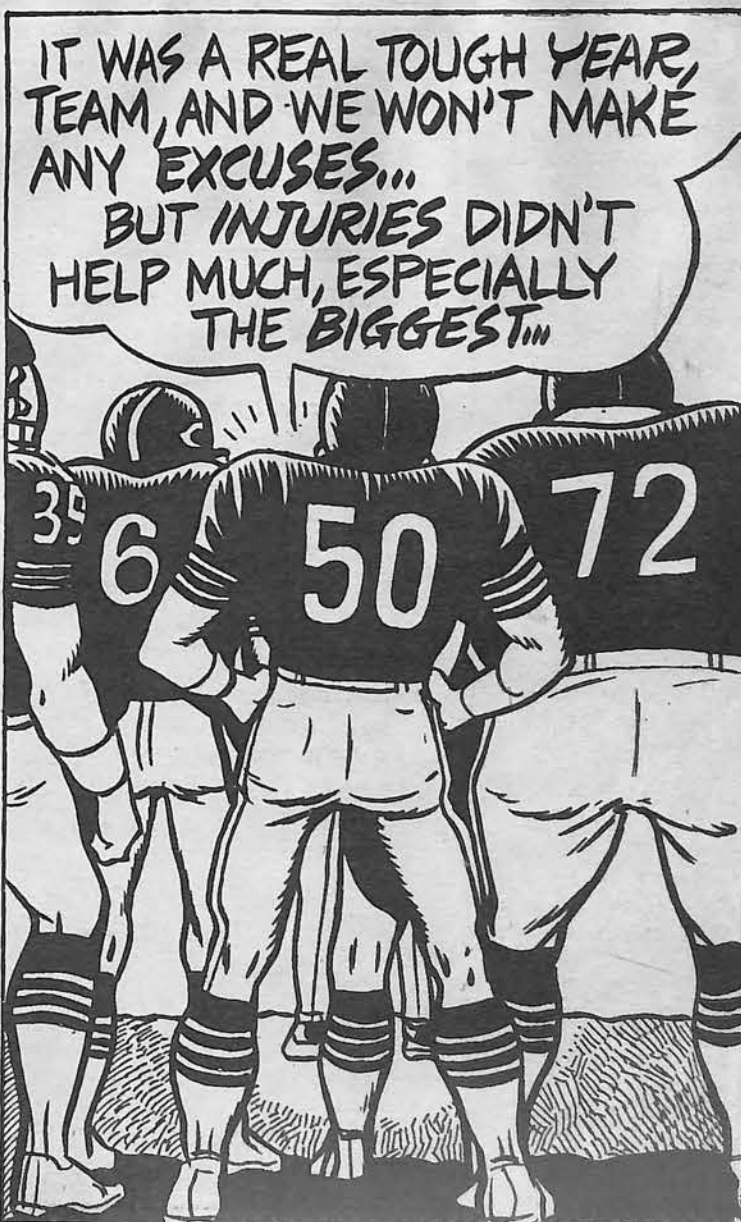
But the fact of the matter is it's still a football game and anything can happen out there. Everyone thinks it will be a romp by the 49ers, but Denver is under a lot of pressure from its own city to do well in this game.

Realistically, you can't find a weakness in this 49er team. So Denver has to play a mistake-free game, and it'll still need San Francisco to make a few mistakes in order to win.

Next issue in 2 weeks

The next issue of the *Bear Report* is the post-Super Bowl issue, printed Feb. 5. In addition to complete coverage of the Super Bowl game in New Orleans, the issue will have a player-by-player analysis of the Bears.

DRAW PLAY By Dick Kulpa



What went wrong?

Many theories, and all may be partially true

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

Immediately after Jim McMahon was traded to San Diego last preseason, many readers sent off letters to the *Bear Report* expressing their dismay and outrage. One reader said without McMahon the Bears would finish 8-8. A couple readers even said the Bears would go 6-10 in 1989.

Take a bow, readers Wally Jimmo of Miami, Fla. and Donald J. Frehe of Chicago, for saying way back at the end of August the Bears would finish 6-10. You were right on the nose.

But maybe you should only take half credit. Yes, the Bears did finish 6-10. But it wasn't just because McMahon was traded.

It's doubtful if anyone knows the exact reason for the Bears' 1989 collapse, especially after their quick 4-0 start that included wins over three 1988 playoff teams.

Was it just because of one thing, like the McMahon trade or the loss of Dan Hampton? Or, more likely, was it a combination of things that, taken together, the Bears were unable to overcome?

Everyone seems to have their own theory on what happened to the 1989 Bears. Here's a few of the more popular theories and some comments about each one:

1, The Bears couldn't overcome the loss of Hampton.

With Hampton at defensive tackle, the Bears were 4-0. Then he had two knee surgeries and was out the rest of the season. The Bears proceeded to go 2-10. In the 12 games Hampton missed, the Bear defense held the opponent to 26 points or less only three times.

The theory goes that without Hampton, the Bears' pass rush suffered. And without any pressure on the quarterback, the secondary was left overexposed. So opposing quarterbacks had their way with the Bear secondary for most of the season.

But the Bear pass rush didn't fall off to nothing without Hampton. Hampton had only two sacks in his four games, and the Bears finished with 39 sacks for the season, just one-half sack short of the NFL average.

The Bears were able to pressure opposing quarterbacks, though possibly not as often as when Hampton was on the line. And a couple defensive breakdowns on key plays that had nothing to do with Hampton's absence single-handedly cost the Bears a couple victories.

The Bears' defensive problems ran deeper than the loss of Hampton.

2, The Bears' defensive secondary is not on a par with the rest of the league.

A lot of big plays against the defense (whether they were long passes or long runs) hurt the Bears in 1989. But was it due to lack of talent? That's doubtful.

Experience and confidence are the keys to success in the secondary. The Bears have the talent back there, but experience and confidence were lacking.

They started rookie Donnell Woolford at cornerback whenever he was healthy. They asked him to do a lot, maybe too much. Most of the time, Woolford responded with solid games and did things most of the other Bear defensive backs couldn't do. But he was only a rookie, and rookies make mistakes.

Experience wasn't the problem at the other cornerback position. Vestee Jackson had a couple solid years in the NFL before last season. But when Mike Ditka benched him when things turned sour, Jackson lost his confidence and never got it back. If he can find it again, he can return to become the solid cornerback he was in 1988. If he can't, he could become another Mike Richardson.

Rookies and second-year players had to fill in at the safety positions much of the year due to injuries to Dave Duerson and Shaun Gayle. Again, experience hurt the Bears there more than anything else. Markus Paul, David Tate, Lorenzo Lynch and Lemuel Stinson made enough good plays that there's hope a little experience will go a long way with them.

3, The Bears couldn't overcome all their injuries on defense.

Hampton, Dent, Jim Morrissey, Woolford, Duerson, Gayle and Ron Rivera all missed significant playing time in 1989. The Bears used 13 different starting lineups this season, and 23 of the 26 defensive players on the Bear roster started at least one game.

With that much changeover from week to week, it's hard to build any kind of cohesiveness within the unit.

The defense managed to turn in some good performances, but without much offensive help, the Bears still lost.

4, The Bears couldn't win without McMahon as their quarterback or their leader.

By the time McMahon was traded, he had lost much of his effectiveness as a leader. Instead, he had become a source of division within the team. The Bears got rid of that divisiveness and distraction by getting rid of him.

Did they also lose a quarterback who could almost single-handedly win games for them? No way. McMahon hasn't done that in two seasons. At least six times in 1989 with San Diego, McMahon had a chance to win the game for the Chargers on their last possession with a touchdown. He failed all six times.

If the Bears had kept McMahon, they probably still would have finished around 6-10, only with a lot more controversy and a lot more quarterback changes.

5, Mike Tomczak and Jim Harbaugh aren't capable of leading the Bears to the Super Bowl.

That may have been true in 1989, but not necessarily next year. Mistakes by Tomczak and Harbaugh certainly cost the Bears a few wins. But they also got the Bears in position to win a few games that they didn't because the defense couldn't hold. Even three touchdown passes by Tomczak against Tampa Bay in the last five minutes of the game couldn't make the difference.

This was the first season Tomczak and Harbaugh got much playing time. Even though 1989 was Tomczak's fifth season in the NFL, he had only started 18 games coming into the year.

For Tomczak and Harbaugh, 1989 was realistically their first shot to show what they can do in the NFL. They deserve a second chance.

Look at what the Steelers have done with Bubby Brister. His first shot at playing time came in 1988, his third year in the league. He started 13 games and finished with a quarterback rating of 65.3. But the Steelers didn't panic and stuck with him for another season.

In 1989, Brister's quarterback rating improved to 73.1 and he led Pittsburgh to the divisional playoffs.

Yes, Tomczak and Harbaugh hurt the Bears in 1989. But they also were able to help them at times, and they could turn the Bears around in 1990.

6, The Bears miss Willie Gault. They need a burner at wide receiver to open up the passing game.

It certainly wouldn't hurt to have a Gault back at wide receiver. Tomczak, and to a lesser extent Harbaugh, throws the deep pass well — better than McMahon.

But the Bears still aren't utilizing the weapons they have. Wendell Davis has

shown he can be a big-play wide receiver. But the Bears don't feature him enough. Ditka didn't alternate his receivers as much later in the year because he felt his best players weren't on the playing field enough. That was a good adjustment. If the Bears stick with their best players most of the time in 1990, that'll allow a receiver to get into the flow of the game better and do some big things.

Before the season, Ditka said the Bear offense has enough weapons to score 24 points a game. But they scored at least 24 points in only seven games. After the sixth week of the season, they scored at least 24 points only twice. And both games were losses.

The Bears have some good offensive weapons now. The trick is to use them in the best way. So far, they haven't discovered that. But no longer alternating receivers is a good start.

7, When things started going bad, the Bears lost their confidence and never got it back.

No doubt, that's true. And with football being such an emotional sport, when you lose your confidence you're at a distinct disadvantage.

By the middle of November (after their second loss to Tampa Bay), the Bears' confidence level was at zero and they finished the season with a six-game losing streak.

Ditka certainly helped the team lose its confidence with his post-game tirades, saying twice he didn't think his team was capa-

ble of winning another game. (The second time, after the Washington game, he didn't know how right he was.)

That couldn't be the only reason for the poor season, though, because something else had to happen for the Bears to lose their confidence. That something else could be any of the other six theories on the Bears' demise.

Most likely, though, the Bears' finished 6-10 because of all seven theories together, not any one alone. In a way, they all interact with each other.

The Bears could have survived any one of these seven things happening to them, maybe even two or three. But when they all hit the Bears one after the other, it was like an avalanche the Bears could never come out of.

And none of these seven things is so terrible that the Bears can't remedy it by next season. An off-season of analysis and watching film will go a long way in helping Harbaugh, Tomczak and the young defensive players. Having Hampton back will help in itself, along with the rest of the injured players. And a couple good games early next season should restore the team's confidence level.

Now is not the time for knee-jerk reactions and solutions. The nucleus is here. A little fine-tuning could go a long way for the Bears. Ditka said he really doesn't think the Bears are as bad as their 1989 record would indicate. He's probably right.

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'Make changes,' readers say

Bears' popularity wanes after poor season

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

The fans are barking, but not to cheer on their beloved Bears. They're barking for changes to be made, according to the *Bear Report's* second annual Readers' Poll.

It's clear readers want to see the coaching staff make changes after the Bears struggled to a 6-10 finish in 1989. Of the 55 players listed in the poll, only 30 (just more than half) wanted to be kept by at least 80 percent of the voters. Last year, 40 of the 58 players in the poll wanted to be kept by at least 80 percent of the voters.

Of the 37 players listed on both last year's and this year's ballot, only three (tight end James Thornton, wide receiver Wendell Davis and defensive back Lemuel Stinson) did better in the voting this year. Four players (running back Neal Anderson, center Jay Hilgenberg, defensive tackle Steve McMichael and kicker Kevin Butler) saw their voting percentages stay the same. The other 30 players all did worse in this year's voting.

Hilgenberg received 496 votes in favor of keeping him, to lead the poll. He was closely followed by linebacker Mike Singletary (495 votes) and Butler (493 votes). Hilgenberg and Butler also had the least votes against them, with three each. Thornton had only five votes against him, and Singletary and McMichael each had just seven votes

against them.

Singletary was the only player last year to have no votes against him. There was no unanimous vote this year.

A total of 502 ballots were received, up from 464 last year. Vote totals for each player are not equal because not every ballot had a vote for each player.

Big losers this year include quarterback Mike Tomczak, defensive tackle William Perry, defensive back Maurice Douglass and wide receiver Dennis McKinnon.

Tomczak suffered the biggest drop in support from last year, going from 95 percent voting to keep him in 1988 to only 58 percent voting to keep him in 1989. He was closely followed by Douglass, dropping from 97 percent to 61 percent, McKinnon (99-65), linebacker Troy Johnson (80-47), cornerback Vestee Jackson (95-64) and defensive back Lorenzo Lynch (87-57).

Perry did the worst in the poll among the veterans, with only 31 percent voting to keep him. That's down from last year, when 34 percent voted to keep him.

Of the seven rookies who spent part or all of the season on the developmental squad, only quarterback Brent Snyder and defensive back George Streeter came close to getting a majority of the vote in favor of keeping them.

The big-name rookies did well, with defensive end Trace Armstrong and linebacker

John Roper leading the way with 98 percent voting to keep each of them. Cornerback Donnell Woolford finished with 95 percent voting to keep him. And running back Mark Green, though he spent much of the season on injured reserve, made enough of an impression as a kick returner to get 94 percent of voters to keep him.

Jim Harbaugh led the quarterbacks, with 86 percent voting to keep him. That was down from last year, though, when 94 percent voted to keep him. Eric Hutchison of Greenfield, Ind. said Harbaugh is a "great leader and tough." Most readers said Harbaugh should be the starter and Tomczak kept as a backup. "Good second stringer," one reader wrote of Tomczak. "Strictly a backup," said another. "Best arm, but lacks confidence," said Andrew Shonk of Martinsville, Ill.

John and Ruby Tarr of Bellevue, Wash., who voted to trade/cut Tomczak, asked, "Did Flutie teach him that an interception is better than a sack?"

Many readers said a priority for the Bears in the off-season is to sign Anderson, who becomes a free agent Feb. 1. But 10 readers voted to trade Anderson or let him sign with another team, saying they'd rather have the draft picks.

One of Anderson's supporters, though, said, "Pay him whatever it takes. He brings back memories of Walter Payton." Pat Cofer

of Crown Point, Ind. added, "A big mistake if he's not signed."

Green and Brad Muster also did well among the running backs. Frank Filippi of Lombard, Ill., one of the 93 percent voting to keep Muster, said he "will be great." Gregg Neuleib of Geneseo, Ill. said Muster is getting "better all the time."

At tight end, readers like the two regulars. Thornton had 99 percent vote to keep him, and Cap Boso finished with 88 percent wanting him back. "Let him play more," Harold Krenz of Letts, Iowa said about Thornton. "Could be great," added Gordon Hampton of Nashville, Tenn. Denny Pattermann of Menasha, Wis. said about the tight ends, "You have to throw to these guys a lot more if you want to win."

Readers want to see more speed at wide receiver, though they overwhelmingly approved of Davis and Dennis Gentry. Ron Morris also did well with 84 percent voting to keep him.

McKinnon suffered a big drop in popularity after another season in which he caused controversy by criticizing other members of the Bear organization. Only 65 percent voted to keep him. "Big mouth, no performance this year," wrote Bud May of Park Ridge, Ill. "Problem child," is how Russell Olson of Lynnwood, Wash. described McKinnon.

On the offensive line, readers didn't have any problem with starters Hilgenberg, Tom Thayer, Mark Bortz or Jim Covert. At least 94 percent of readers approved of them. But Keith Van Horne lagged behind at 67 percent voting to keep him, the lowest percentage among the linemen.

Age was the biggest reason readers gave for not wanting Van Horne back. He turned 32 in November.

Chuck Bez of Fircrest, Wash. said, "The older guys must start being replaced."

Readers again were down on Perry. Even the minority who voted to keep Perry said his weight must come down. Gary Kramp of Rockford, Ill. said Perry "doesn't have enough desire." Rick Golinvaux of Dubuque, Iowa said Perry has had "too many chances — no attitude." Another reader simply wrote about Perry, "Give up." Lyle Miller of Ft. Wayne, Ind. said the Bears should either "trade or give away" Perry.

Many readers hoped Dan Hampton will make it back for another season. A few others, though, would rather see him retire. "His bones won't hold up," one reader said. Another wrote, "Don't destroy — retire."

Ninety-eight percent of voters wanted Richard Dent back, many saying they're glad he's already signed to another contract. But John Lucas of Rockford, Ill. said Dent is "vastly overrated."

Voters like the Bears' starting linebackers but aren't as sure about the backups. Three of the five linebackers who weren't starting at the end of the season failed to get more than two-thirds of voters wanting to keep them. Mickey Pruitt, Johnson and Steve Hyche didn't score well, but Dante Jones wanted to be kept by 84 percent of voters and Jim Morrissey by 77 percent. Those that didn't vote to keep Morrissey expressed concern over his injuries.

Among the defensive backs, readers tended to like the starters but weren't as sure about the backups. "Can't hang with the big dogs," wrote Jim Dienes of Cary, N.C. about the young defensive backs.

Woolford, though, did well with 95 percent voting to keep him. "Will shock you next year," one reader said. "Asked too much of him in '89," wrote David Mallon of Fairport, N.Y.

The only surprise in the voting on the kickers was that three people actually voted to trade/cut Butler, even though he's in the top five on the NFL's all-time field-goal accuracy list.

Bear Report Readers' Poll Results

QUARTERBACKS

Player, age	Keep	Trade/Cut
Jim Harbaugh, 25	428 — 86%	69 — 14%
Brent Snyder, 23	207 — 47%	234 — 53%
Mike Tomczak, 27	285 — 58%	205 — 42%

RUNNING BACKS

Neal Anderson, 25	489 — 98%	10 — 2%
Brian Bero, 23	126 — 30%	293 — 70%
Mark Green, 22	461 — 94%	28 — 6%
Brad Muster, 24	466 — 93%	33 — 7%
Thomas Sanders, 27	392 — 80%	100 — 20%
Brian Taylor, 22	172 — 40%	258 — 60%

TIGHT ENDS

Cap Boso, 26	432 — 88%	59 — 12%
James Coley, 22	128 — 30%	301 — 70%
James Thornton, 24	490 — 99%	5 — 1%

WIDE RECEIVERS

Wendell Davis, 23	473 — 96%	18 — 4%
Dennis Gentry, 30	483 — 97%	17 — 3%
Glen Kozlowski, 26	268 — 56%	208 — 44%
Dennis McKinnon, 28	318 — 65%	172 — 35%
Ron Morris, 24	414 — 84%	80 — 16%
Tom Waddle, 22	151 — 35%	281 — 65%

OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

Mark Bortz, 28	472 — 95%	22 — 5%
Jim Covert, 29	474 — 95%	22 — 5%
Chris Dyko, 23	334 — 74%	119 — 26%
Jerry Fontenot, 22	417 — 88%	59 — 12%
Jay Hilgenberg, 29	496 — 99%	3 — 1%
Tom Thayer, 28	457 — 94%	29 — 6%
Keith Van Horne, 32	333 — 67%	162 — 33%
John Wojciechowski, 26	413 — 85%	73 — 15%
Dave Zawatson, 23	315 — 70%	137 — 30%

DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

Player, age	Keep	Trade/Cut
Trace Armstrong, 23	489 — 98%	9 — 2%
Dick Chapura, 25	268 — 58%	197 — 42%
Richard Dent, 28	487 — 98%	11 — 2%
Dan Hampton, 32	465 — 95%	23 — 5%
Steve McMichael, 31	489 — 99%	7 — 1%
William Perry, 26	150 — 31%	331 — 69%
John Shannon, 24	185 — 40%	272 — 60%
Tony Woods, 23	292 — 64%	167 — 36%

LINEBACKERS

Steve Hyche, 26	92 — 21%	343 — 79%
Troy Johnson, 23	215 — 47%	243 — 53%
Dante Jones, 24	400 — 84%	79 — 16%
Jim Morrissey, 26	382 — 77%	111 — 23%
Mickey Pruitt, 24	290 — 62%	179 — 38%
Ron Rivera, 27	468 — 94%	31 — 6%
John Roper, 23	483 — 98%	11 — 2%
Mike Singletary, 30	495 — 99%	7 — 1%

DEFENSIVE BACKS

Maurice Douglass, 25	289 — 61%	187 — 39%
Dave Duerson, 28	470 — 95%	27 — 5%
Shaun Gayle, 27	413 — 84%	79 — 16%
Vestee Jackson, 26	311 — 64%	175 — 36%
Lorenzo Lynch, 26	265 — 57%	200 — 43%
Markus Paul, 23	326 — 70%	138 — 30%
Lemuel Stinson, 23	386 — 82%	84 — 18%
George Streeter, 22	220 — 50%	221 — 50%
David Tate, 24	415 — 87%	62 — 13%
Donnell Woolford, 23	472 — 95%	22 — 5%

SPECIALISTS

Maury Buford, 29	370 — 77%	108 — 23%
Kevin Butler, 27	493 — 99%	3 — 1%

Note: Not all player have the same vote totals because some readers did not vote on every player.

Season recap: Bears didn't have what it takes

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

From the quick 4-0 start to the second straight loss to Green Bay in Week 15, the 1989 season was full of surprises for Bear fans. Unfortunately, most of the surprises were bad.

The season will be remembered for its many frustrations, injuries and the trade of Jim McMahon. But there was much more to the season. Here's a recap of the highlights, and many lowlights, of the year:

* * * * *

July 28: Training camp opens without first-round draft picks Donnell Woolford and Trace Armstrong, Steve McMichael, Dave Duerson, Shaun Gayle and William Perry, all of whom are contract holdouts.

July 31: Duerson, Gayle and Perry are signed and have reported to camp.

Aug. 2: The Bears sign punter Maury Buford, who was just released by the Packers. His only competition in camp is rookie Kent Sullivan.

Aug. 4: McMichael signs a one-year contract extension and reports to camp, leaving only Woolford and Armstrong still holding out.

Aug. 9: Mike Ditka becomes increasingly impatient with Woolford and Armstrong, saying, "I think we'll do our best (to sign them) through this weekend and then maybe set some ultimatums. I feel very disappointed because I think the young men are being cheated."

Aug. 14: The Bears open the preseason with a 28-20 win over the Dolphins in Miami. The quarterback derby is still a dead-heat as Jim McMahon, Mike Tomczak and Jim Harbaugh all have good games. Tomczak throws two touchdown passes and completes 7-of-8 attempts as the starter. McMahon plays only one series, completing 4-of-6 passes.

Aug. 16: Woolford signs with the Bears and practices that afternoon.

Dan Hampton, recovering from offseason knee surgery, begins full practices for the first time, one week ahead of schedule.

Aug. 17: The Bears break camp at Platteville, Wis. and head back to Chicago.

Aug. 18: Jim McMahon is traded to San Diego for a conditional draft pick, which later turns out to be a second-round pick.

Almost getting lost in the McMahon-trade hype, is Armstrong's signing with the Bears that morning.

McMahon leaves with one last parting jab at Ditka, saying, "He believes he can win with anybody. It's his coaching that gets it done. Now I don't have to deal with that anymore. I'm very relieved. I feel sorry for the rest of the guys that have to put up with him."

McMahon also claims Ditka didn't want to compete with him for endorsements, saying, "You get a lot of endorsements, and you know Mike Ditka's ego. Anyone who can take away from his spotlight, he's going to get rid of. And that's what happened."

Ditka doesn't return McMahon's jabs, saying only, "It's an ideal situation for Jim to continue his career in a quality situation where he's going to be the starting quarterback. They want him to start. They don't want him to back up. I couldn't give him that guarantee."

Aug. 21: The Bears lose to the Chargers at Soldier Field, 24-7. McMahon makes a cameo appearance for San Diego, starting the second half and handing off once and

passing three times, completing one. He then leaves the game.

Aug. 24: Ditka names Tomczak his starting quarterback for the regular season.

Aug. 28: The Bears lose to Kansas City, 22-17 at Soldier Field, leaving Ditka angry. "We stunk up the football field," he says after the game. "Either we're going to get our butts whipped this whole year or somebody better wake up because we are not nearly as good as we think we are or a lot of those guys in there think they are."

"We'll either do it my way or we won't do it. No more their way. I'm tired about hearing how good people are. I want to see them play from now on."

Aug. 30: Defensive back Maurice Douglass is suspended for 30 days for violating the league's anabolic steroids policy. Douglass says he never knowingly took the steroids.

Aug. 31: Assistant head coach Ed Hughes announces his retirement, saying the job was no longer fun. Hughes was a staunch supporter of McMahon, and his trade was speculated to have a lot to do with Hughes' decision.

Sept. 2: In the final tuneup before the regular season begins, the Bears beat the Raiders at Los Angeles, 41-38. Wide receiver Wendell Davis grabs three touchdown passes, including the game-winner.

Sept. 4: Eight-year veteran tackle Kurt Becker is among the Bears' final cuts. Defensive end Sean Smith and center John Adickes also are released.

Sept. 10: The Bears open the regular season with a 17-13 win over Cincinnati at Soldier Field. Hampton is named NFC defensive player of the week for his performance in the game, which included five solo tackles, two assists, two sacks, two passes knocked down and a blocked field-goal attempt.

Sept. 17: The Bears turn three interceptions in the fourth quarter into 21 points to blow open a close game and beat the Vikings at Soldier Field, 38-7.

After missing three weeks of training camp plus the Cincinnati game because of a pulled hamstring, linebacker Jim Morrissey returns to his starting role against Minnesota.

Woolford separates his shoulder making an interception in the game and misses the next three weeks.

Sept. 24: In their first road game of the year, the Bears knock off Detroit, 47-27. The Bears score on nine of their 12 possessions in the game. Tomczak has his best game of his career, completing 17-of-25 passes for 302 yards, two touchdowns and no interceptions.

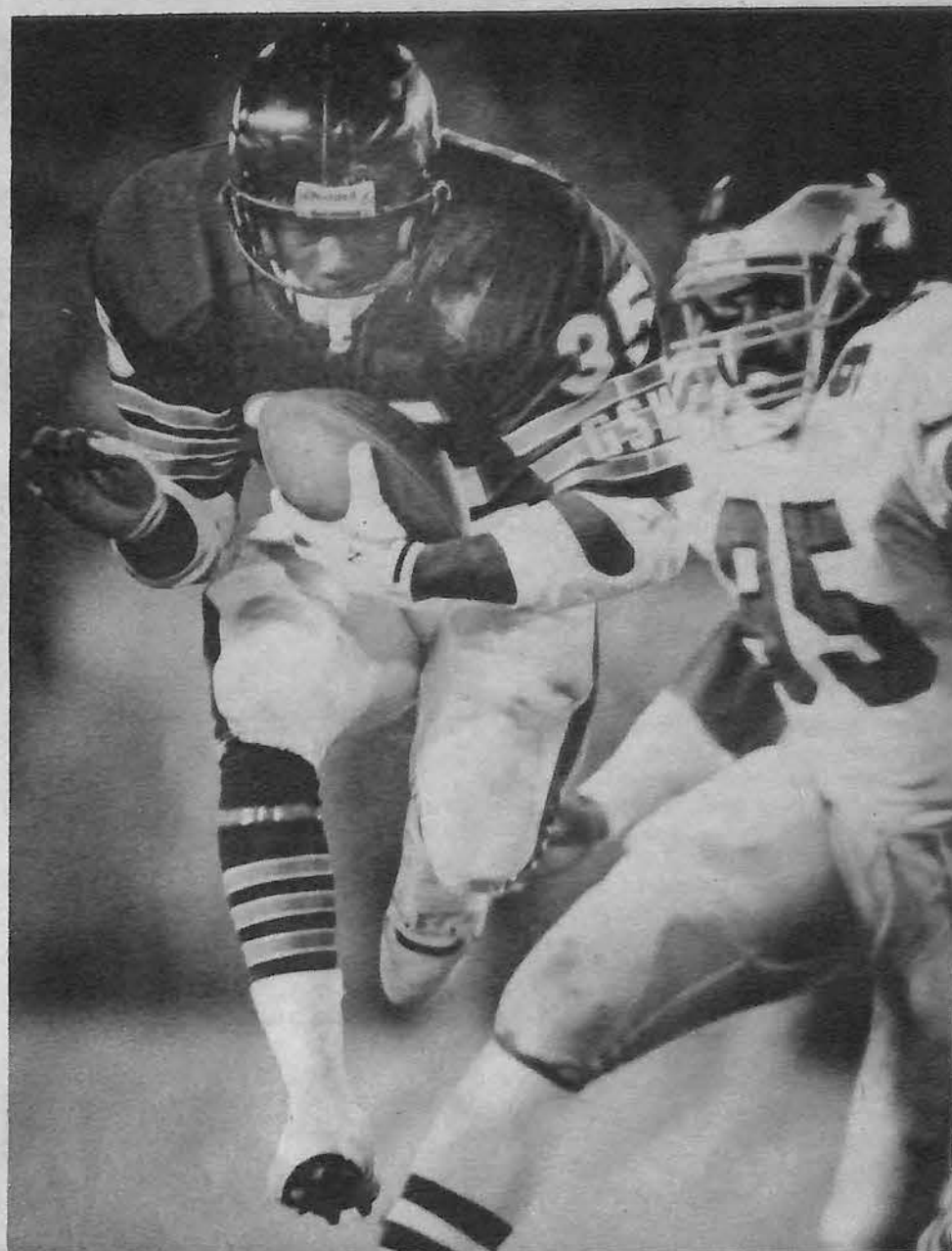
Oct. 2: The Bears run their record to a perfect 4-0 with a 27-13 win over the Eagles on Monday night at Soldier Field. The Bears get two fumble recoveries and four interceptions to nullify Eagles' quarterback Randall Cunningham's 401 passing yards. Cunningham attempts 62 passes against the Bears, the most ever against the Bears, and completes 32.

Tomczak, meanwhile, continues to look sharp, completing 24-of-38 passes for 266 yards, three touchdowns and just one interception. He's named NFL player of the week for his performance.

Ditka announces after the game Hampton, who hurt his knee against Minnesota, will have knee surgery and miss the next three to four weeks. When asked after the game how his knee felt, Hampton says, "If I was a horse they'd shoot me."

Douglass returns from his 30-day suspension and plays against the Eagles.

Oct. 4: Hampton has knee surgery and



The biggest bright spot on the team in 1989 was Neal Anderson, who had his second consecutive season rushing for more than 1,000 yards.

(Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

the Bears announce he'll miss at least the next six weeks and possibly the rest of the season. Perry moves into the starting defensive tackle position vacated by Hampton.

Neal Anderson is named NFC offensive player of the month for September.

Oct. 8: Tampa Bay jumps out to a 21-0 lead and holds on for its first win over the Bears in 12 tries, 42-35 at Tampa Stadium. "Evidently, we're very stereotyped in a lot of things we're doing," Ditka says after the game. "They seemed to know what we were doing."

Armstrong severely sprains his ankle and won't be ready for next week's Houston game.

Oct. 11: The entire Tampa Bay offensive unit is named NFC offensive player of the week for its performance against the Bear defense.

Oct. 15: The Bears turn the ball over six times and blow a nine-point lead with less than five minutes to play while losing to Houston at Soldier Field, 33-28.

"I don't remember feeling this bad in 1982, when I knew we couldn't play football," Ditka says after the game. "Now I don't know if we're capable of winning another football game. I don't think we are at this point. This football team is in disarray and we are not very good. We need some of our key guys for leadership, and I'm not sure I see it."

With Armstrong and Hampton out with injuries, the Bears' starting defensive line consists of Richard Dent, McMichael, Perry and rookie Tony Woods. John Shannon fills in at times for Dent, who has a thigh bruise.

On top of that, Morrissey suffers a lacerated kidney in the game and will miss the rest of the season.

Oct. 16: Cornerback Vestee Jackson learns in a team meeting he's being replaced in the starting lineup by Lorenzo Lynch.

Oct. 18: Jackson fails to show up for practice.

Oct. 19: Jackson again is a no-show at practice, and Ditka threatens to suspend him if he doesn't show up Friday.

Oct. 20: Ditka and Jackson meet and clear the air. Jackson isn't suspended, but he is fined a total of \$6,000 and told he still won't start Monday night against Cleveland.

Oct. 23: The Bears' 27-7 loss on Monday night at Cleveland is their third straight and knocks them out of first place in the NFC Central Division for the first time in 86 weeks. It also marks the first time a team coached by Ditka has lost three games in a row.

Lynch starts in place of Jackson, who doesn't see any action until the fourth quarter. Jackson then promptly gives up a 97-yard touchdown bomb.

Armstrong doesn't start but sees some action on the field for the first time since injuring his ankle against Tampa Bay.

Oct. 29: With the Bears down 3-0 against the Rams midway through the second quarter, Harbaugh replaces Tomczak at quarterback and leads the Bears to a 20-10 win at Soldier Field.

Tomczak says after the game he isn't upset about being replaced. "I'm encouraged by a lot of things," he says. "The easiest thing for me to do is hang my head and walk out of here very upset. But that's not the Mike Tomczak that I know."

Nov. 1: The Bears sign Dent to a five-year, \$6 million contract extension, avoiding the possibility of losing him to free agency in the off-season.

Nov. 5: The replay official overturns a call that nullified a Packer touchdown with 32 seconds left in the game, giving Green Bay the score and a 14-13 win over the Bears at Lambeau Field. It's the first time the Bears' lose to Green Bay since 1984. The Bears also lose to Green Bay and Tampa Bay in the same season for the first time since 1981, and they have their streak of 68 consecutive

Continued Page 6

Bear Report's 1989 'Bear Awards'

By Michael Polzin
Managing Editor

Hidden somewhere among the ashes of the 1989 season are good performances from a few Bear players. Things might not have always clicked for the team this past season, but that didn't prevent some individuals from playing well.

As for the many poor performances by the Bears, there's some recognition for those, too, in the second annual *Bear Report's* "Bear Awards."

* * * * *

MOST VALUABLE PLAYER — Dan Hampton. How could he be the MVP when he only played in four games? Because the Bears won all four of those games, which accounted for two-thirds of their wins for the season.

When Hampton went down with yet another knee injury, the defensive line never recovered and was merely patched together for the rest of the season. Hampton's loss exposed the biggest weakness on the Bear defense — lack of depth on the line.

The Bears could have survived better the loss of Mike Singletary because of their depth at linebacker.

Neal Anderson was another candidate for



Dan Hampton

the award. He had a great season and means a lot to the offense, but it still struggled even with him in the lineup. The defense never struggled with Hampton there.

MOST VALUABLE OFFENSIVE PLAYER — The Missing Quarterback. The Bears had just about all the right weapons in 1989 for

an explosive offense. When Mike Tomczak was playing well early in the season, the explosiveness was there.

But once he went into a slump that he never got out of, the Bears didn't have a quarterback the rest of the season who could get the job done. If they did, the season could have turned out a little differently.

Therefore, the offensive MVP, the player that made the biggest difference, is the quarterback the Bears didn't have.

The runnerup is Anderson. He rushed for more than 1,200 yards and was the Bears' leading receiver with 50 catches. He was the most consistent player on offense and was the big scoring threat throughout the season.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR — Defensive end Trace Armstrong. Armstrong didn't have a spectacular first season with the Bears. But he played his position well enough that it wasn't a glaring weakness, which is what the Bears needed from him.

If Armstrong wasn't able to start, the defensive line would have been hopelessly understaffed with talent, and the Bears might have been forced to switch to a 3-4 defense.

Injuries and a few, but costly, mistakes prevented cornerback Donnell Woolford from getting the award. The only other candidate, linebacker John Roper, played well at the end of the season but started slowly.

MOST IMPROVED PLAYER — Brad Muster. He got the Most Improved Rookie award last season from the *Bear Report*, and he steadily continued to get better this season.

A lot of that, though, had to do with the Bear coaching staff learning how to use him more effectively. Muster's biggest asset is his ability to catch the ball out of the backfield, and this season he caught 32 passes for 259 yards and three touchdowns.

He showed a better ability to run in short-yardage situations, scoring five rushing touchdowns. He also averaged 4.1 yards a carry.

MOST IMPROVED ROOKIE — Roper. The knock on him coming out of college was his poor attitude. He had the talent to be a first-round pick, but his attitude knocked him down to the second round.

Early in the season, the Bear coaching staff was frustrated at not being able to get everything that Roper had out of him.

But Roper slowly learned what it takes to make it in the NFL, and when he took over

for Jim Morrissey after he suffered a lacerated kidney, Roper proved to be a solid NFL linebacker with a bright future.

MOST DISAPPOINTING PLAYER — Tomczak. Last season he was the *Bear Report's* Most Improved Player. If he could have carried over what he learned in 1988 to 1989, the Bears would be in good shape.

And he did, for the first four games. Then, for some reason nobody knows (probably not even Tomczak), he lost it. The rest of the season was a struggle for both him and the Bears.

Good things were expected from Tomczak in 1989. That's what made Jim McMahon expendable. But after the fourth week the good things were gone.

He was a disappointment in 1989, but that doesn't mean you should give up on Tomczak for 1990. He's shown he can play well in the NFL. The 1989 season was his first shot at being a starter for the entire season. He deserves a second chance. He has the talent and desire to take advantage of another chance, but only time will tell if he can actually do it.

Runnerup for the award goes to cornerback Vestee Jackson. He had a solid season in 1988 but was benched after Week 6 in 1989. He got his starting job back, but his confidence never returned and he was inconsistent for the rest of the season.

UNSUNG HERO OF THE YEAR — Dennis Gentry. He's the player the Bears look to more than anyone else on third down. And he comes through almost every time he has the chance.

Also, he's a solid kick returner. He averaged 23.8 yards a return to rank fourth in the NFC.

PLAY OF THE YEAR — Richard Dent's flying tackle of George Bell in the Rams' game. After Bell got a handoff, Rams' fullback Buford McGee tried to cut down Dent. Instead, Dent jumped over McGee and dived at Bell at the same time, hitting Bell in midair and knocking him sideways to the ground.

BEST SINGLE GAME PERFORMANCE — Tomczak's three touchdown passes coming off the bench in the last five minutes against Tampa Bay.

GAME OF THE YEAR — None. Not in a 6-10 season, anyway.

STATISTIC OF THE YEAR — The Bears were 4-0 with Hampton in the lineup, 2-10 after he was injured.

Recap

Continued From Page 5

wins when holding their opponent to 17 points or less snapped.

Nov. 12: The Bears beat the Steelers 20-0 to remain one game behind the Vikings in the division. Kevin Butler extends his streak of consecutive field goals made to 22.

Nov. 19: Despite Tomczak's three touchdown passes in the last five minutes of the game, the Bear defense gives up the game-winning drive to Vinny Testaverde and Tampa Bay as the Bucs beat the Bears, 32-31 on Donald Igwebuike's 28-yard field goal as time runs out.

Butler ties the NFL record for consecutive field goals made with his 23rd straight against Tampa Bay.

Nov. 20: Hampton has surgery on his right knee and is officially out for the season.

Nov. 26: Tomczak is back as the starting quarterback, but he can't make much of a difference in the Bears' 38-14 loss to the Redskins at Washington. After the game, Ditka proclaims the season is over.

"We are a sad football team. I think right now there's nothing this year we can do about it. I think it's over," he says. "It's a pretty dark day for this organization. This is the absolute worst exhibition of football I've ever seen. I refuse to stand back and give credit to the other people because we stink. We are absolutely an atrocious football team at this point right now. There's no question in my mind that we will be fortunate to win one more game. This is just not a good football team. And I fooled myself. I thought we were."

Nov. 27: Ditka changes his mind, saying the season isn't really over yet. "I think we still have a shot," he says.

Nov. 28: To escape the poor weather in Chicago, the Bears head to Madison, Wis. to practice at the University of Wisconsin's indoor facility. Another reason for the move is to create a change of pace before the Bears' big game against the Vikings at Minnesota.

Dec. 3: The Bears lose to the Vikings, 27-16, and are all but mathematically eliminated from the playoffs. Ditka, however, stays positive after this loss and says he was wrong for getting on his players after the Washington loss.

"I have no qualms about these guys even though I got on them pretty hard last week," Ditka says after the game. "I was totally out of line. I was wrong. It's a problem that will never come up again. If we're not winning, then I can't blame the team. I have to blame me."

"I'm going to be as positive as I can. That's the main thing I can do. That's why I was out of line last week. I have great faith in these guys. And it'll work. And the Bears will be back. I promise you that. They'll be back."

Butler breaks the NFL record for consecutive field goals made with his 24th straight against the Vikings. But the streak quickly ends when his next attempt is blocked.

Dec. 7: After injuring his knee against the Vikings, Perry is placed on injured reserve and will have arthroscopic surgery done on the knee.

Dec. 10: The Bears' hopes of making the playoffs officially end with their 27-17 loss to the Lions at Soldier Field.

Dec. 17: Harbaugh starts at quarterback against the Packers at Soldier Field and completes 20-of-28 passes for 205 yards. Anderson rushes for 119 yards. The Bears convert on 9-of-11 third-down attempts. But they still lose to Green Bay, 40-28, as the defense gives up 456 yards to the Packers.

Fans quickly jump off the Bears' bandwagon, as 22,165 people don't show up for the game.

Dec. 18: Perry has surgery performed on his right knee, and the metal plate in his left forearm also is removed.

Dec. 20: Anderson, Jay Hilgenberg and Mike Singletary are the only Bears named to the NFC Pro Bowl team.

Dec. 21: While taping WBBM-AM's "At Issue" program, Bears' president Michael McCaskey says he wants to see Ditka refrain from screaming at his assistant coaches and players while on the sidelines during games and would like Ditka to do a few less commercial endorsements next year.

Dec. 24: The Bears finish their dismal season at San Francisco on Christmas Eve, when they are beat by the 49ers, 26-0. The Bears finish the season with six straight losses, their most consecutive losses since 1978, when they lost eight in a row. Their 6-10 record is their worst since a 4-10 mark in 1975.

The game also marks the end of fullback Matt Suhey's 10-year career in the NFL with the Bears.

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Super Bowl XXIV

San Francisco

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Age	Yr.	College
6	Mike Cofer	K	6-1	190	27	2	North Carolina State
8	Steve Young	QB	6-2	200	28	5	Brigham Young
9	Barry Helton	P	6-3	205	24	2	Colorado
13	Steve Bono	QB	6-4	215	27	5	UCLA
16	Joe Montana	QB	6-2	195	33	11	Notre Dame
21	Eric Wright	CB	6-1	185	30	8	Missouri
22	Tim McKyer	CB	6-0	174	26	4	Texas-Arlington
23	Spencer Tillman	RB	5-11	206	25	3	Oklahoma
26	Darryl Pollard	CB	5-11	187	25	3	Weber State
29	Don Griffin	CB	6-0	176	25	4	Middle Tennessee State
30	Keith Henderson	FB	6-1	220	23	R	Georgia
31	Chet Brooks	S	5-11	191	23	2	Texas A&M
32	Terrence Flagler	RB	6-0	200	25	3	Clemson
33	Roger Craig	RB	6-0	214	29	7	Nebraska
40	Johnny Jackson	S	6-1	204	22	R	Houston
42	Ronnie Lott	S	6-0	200	30	9	Southern California
44	Tom Rathman	FB	6-1	232	26	4	Nebraska
46	Tom Holmoe	S	6-2	195	29	6	Brigham Young
53	Bill Romanowski	LB	6-4	231	23	2	Boston College
54	Matt Miller	LB	6-2	245	31	10	Penn State
56	Steve Hendrickson	LB	6-0	245	23	R	California
58	Keena Turner	LB	6-2	222	31	10	Purdue
59	Keith DeLong	LB	6-2	235	22	R	Tennessee
60	Chuck Thomas	C-G	6-3	280	28	4	Oklahoma
61	Jesse Sapolu	C-G	6-4	260	28	4	Hawaii
62	Guy McIntyre	G	6-3	265	28	6	Georgia
64	Jim Burt	NT	6-1	260	30	9	Miami (FL)
66	Terry Tausch	G	6-5	276	30	8	Texas
67	Pete Kugler	DE	6-4	255	30	7	Penn State
69	Bruce Collie	G-T	6-6	275	27	5	Texas-Arlington
74	Steve Wallace	T	6-5	276	24	4	Auburn
75	Kevin Fagan	DE	6-4	265	26	3	Miami (FL)
77	Wm. "Bubba" Paris	T	6-6	299	28	7	Michigan
78	Pierce Holt	DE	6-4	280	27	2	Angelo State
79	Harris Barton	T	6-4	280	25	3	North Carolina
80	Jerry Rice	WR	6-2	200	27	5	Mississippi Valley State
81	Jamie Williams	TE	6-4	245	29	7	Nebraska
82	John Taylor	WR	6-1	185	27	3	Delaware State
84	Brent Jones	TE	6-4	230	26	3	Santa Clara
85	Mike Wilson	WR	6-3	215	30	9	Washington State
88	Mike Sherrard	WR	6-2	187	26	2	UCLA
89	Wesley Walls	TE	6-5	246	23	R	Mississippi
91	Larry Roberts	DE	6-3	275	26	4	Alabama
94	Charles Haley	LB-DE	6-5	230	25	4	James Madison
96	Daniel Stubbs	DE	6-4	260	24	2	Miami (FL)
98	Antonio Goss	LB	6-4	228	23	R	North Carolina
99	Michael Walter	LB	6-3	238	28	7	Oregon

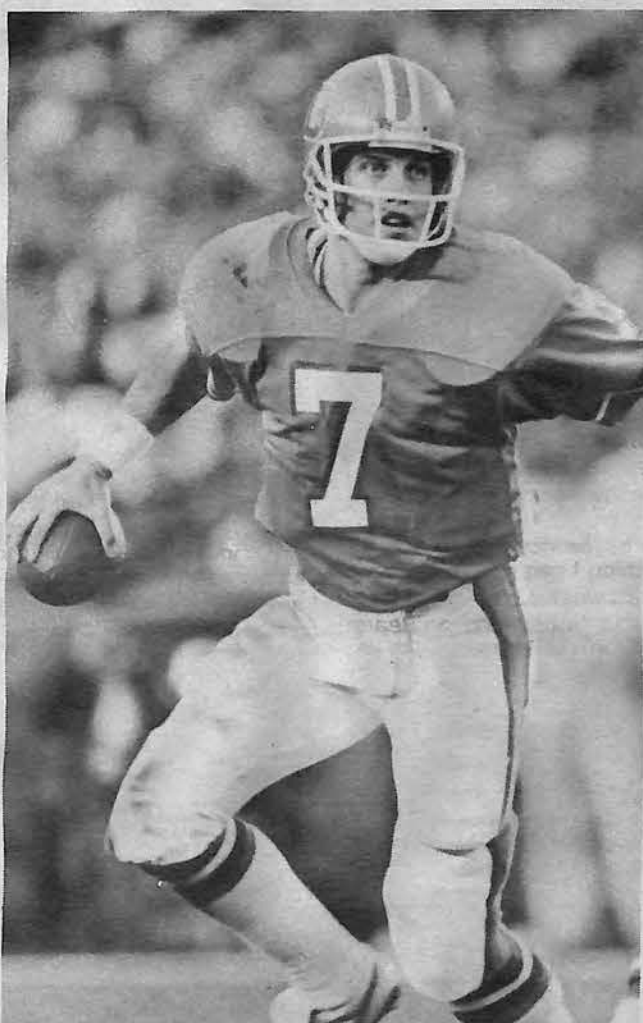


Facts and Figures

Kickoff — 4 p.m. Central time, Sunday, Jan. 28.
Site — The Louisiana Superdome, New Orleans.
Playing surface — Artificial turf.

Series history — The teams have met six times in the regular season, and the Broncos have won the last four times after dropping the first two to the 49ers. Their most recent meeting in the regular season came in 1988, when the Broncos beat the 49ers in overtime at San Francisco, 16-13. Also in the '80s, the Broncos beat San Francisco two other times at Denver, 17-16 in 1985 and 24-21 in 1982. The teams have never met in post-season play.

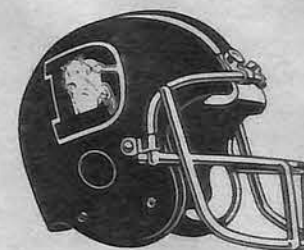
Radio-TV coverage — The game will be televised live nationally by CBS-TV, Channel 2 in Chicago. Pregame coverage begins at 2 p.m. Central time. CBS-Radio (WBBM, 780 AM in Chicago) also will carry the game nationally.



Broncos quarterback John Elway

Denver Broncos

No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Age	School
2	Mike Horan	P	6-0	180	6	30	Long Beach State
7	John Elway	QB	6-3	215	7	29	Stanford
8	Gary Kubiak	QB	6-0	192	7	28	Texas A & M
9	David Treadwell	K	6-1	175	1	22	Clemson
23	Sammy Winder	RB	5-11	203	8	30	S. Mississippi
24	Wymon Henderson	CB	5-10	186	3	27	Nevada-Las Vegas
25	Kip Corrington	S	5-11	180	1	24	Texas A & M
26	Bobby Humphrey	RB	6-1	201	R	23	Alabama
27	Steve Atwater	S	6-3	217	R	23	Arkansas
29	Darren Carrington	CB	6-1	189	R	23	Northern Arizona
30	Steve Sewell	RB/WR	6-3	210	5	26	Oklahoma
32	Melvin Bratton	RB	6-1	225	R	24	Miami (Fla.)
34	Tyrone Braxton	CB	5-11	185	3	24	No. Dakota State
35	Ken Bell	RB/WR	5-10	190	4	24	Boston College
36	Mark Haynes	CB	5-11	195	10	30	Colorado
40	Jeff Alexander	RB	6-0	232	1	24	Southern University
48	Randy Robbins	S	6-2	189	6	26	Arizona
49	Dennis Smith	S	6-3	200	9	29	Southern California
51	Marc Munford	LB	6-2	231	3	23	Nebraska
54	Keith Bishop	C/G	6-3	290	9	32	Baylor
55	Rick Dennison	LB	6-3	220	8	31	Colorado State
56	Michael Brooks	LB	6-1	235	3	24	Louisiana State
57	Mike Ruethe	C	6-4	275	4	27	Texas
58	Scott Curtis	LB	6-1	230	2	24	New Hampshire
59	Tim Lucas	LB	6-3	230	3	28	California
60	Gerald Perry	T	6-6	305	2	24	Southern University
61	Andre Townsend	DE/NT	6-3	265	6	27	Mississippi
65	Monte Smith	G	6-4	270	R	22	North Dakota
66	Jim Juriga	T	6-6	275	2	25	Illinois
67	Doug Widell	G	6-4	287	R	23	Boston College
68	Brad Henke	DE/NT	6-3	275	R	23	Arizona
71	Greg Kragen	NT	6-3	265	5	27	Utah State
72	Keith Kartz	C	6-4	270	3	26	California
73	Simon Fletcher	LB	6-5	240	5	27	Houston
76	Ken Lanier	T	6-3	290	9	30	Florida State
77	Karl Mecklenburg	LB	6-3	240	7	29	Minnesota
80	Mark Jackson	WR	5-10	180	4	26	Purdue
82	Vance Johnson	WR	5-11	185	5	26	Arizona
83	Michael Young	WR	6-1	183	6	27	UCLA
84	Ricky Nattiel	WR	5-9	180	3	23	Florida
87	Pat Kelly	TE	6-6	252	2	23	Syracuse
88	Clarence Kay	TE	6-2	237	6	28	Georgia
89	Orson Mobley	TE	6-5	259	4	26	Salem College
90	Ron Holmes	DE	6-4	265	5	26	Washington
91	Warren Powers	DE	6-6	287	R	24	Maryland
92	Alphonso Carreker	DE	6-6	272	6	27	Florida State
97	Bruce Klostermann	LB	6-4	225	3	26	South Dakota State



By JOHN DELCOS

They are teams with reputations, but insist history won't determine the Battle of New Orleans.

The powerful San Francisco 49ers, on cruise control since 1981 when they won their first of three Super Bowls, are the team of the 1980s and have earned a dynasty label. However, they're college freshmen and say the high school glory days don't matter.

"If there's anything I've learned, it's never to believe yesterday's news," said 49ers free safety Ronnie Lott.

Added linebacker Keena Turner: "I've got three rings. They don't mean anything."

The Denver Broncos are also a team with a label: They are 0-3 in ring games. "We have something to prove," said receiver Vance Johnson.

John Elway said he wanted five Super Bowl rings, but has lost 39-20 to the New York Giants in 1987 and 42-10 to Washington the following year. If the Broncos fail again — their first Super Bowl loss was with Craig Morton against Dallas — they'll tie Minnesota as the only team to lose four Su-

per Bowls.

With that stigma staring them in the face, it was suggested the Broncos would be better off losing to Cleveland in the AFC Championship to avoid the embarrassment of an oh-four. Elway laughed at the thought and responded with his best game in a disappointing personal season: he threw for 385 yards and three touchdowns in beating the Browns, 37-21.

Afraid? Not Elway

Denver might lose again, but Elway isn't afraid of failure.

"As a kid, this is the game you dream of playing in," he said. "I want to play the best I can, to have some fun and seize the moment."

"It will take our best game of the year. We're peaking at the right time. We had our best game against Cleveland. I didn't have a good year. In fact, the last two seasons have not been great for me. But the last two games have helped my confidence."

"We have a more balanced offense than we had in our two previous Super Bowls, and we have a lot better defense. This is the best

team I've ever been on going to a Super Bowl, but we also may be playing the best team that's ever played in the Super Bowl. That makes it tougher."

Publicly, the Broncos are displaying a confidence not associated with a team that has lost its last two Super Bowls by a composite 81-30. Privately, the losses still sting.

When the playoffs began, the Broncos and 49ers were favored to reach New Orleans, with San Francisco a projected 7-point winner. In the wake of the 49ers steamrolling over Minnesota and the Los Angeles Rams by a combined 71-16, the line swelled to 11.

Broncos have nothing to lose

"That makes the chip a little bit larger on our shoulder," said Elway. "The AFC as a whole hasn't gotten a lot of respect compared to the big guys in the NFC. But I don't think it's something any player dwells on. I'm sure none of the guys on the team worry about the fact they're 11-point underdogs. I know I don't."

"It's tough to say we're as good as the 49ers, but we'll have nothing to lose. We can just go in and let it fly."

The Broncos hear the talk about being drawn and quartered. They are amused by the betting line.

"I figured it would be about 30," safety Dennis Smith said. "I think it has to do with how they're playing now, and how we've played in previous Super Bowls."

Smith then shifted into cliché overdrive. "It's just talk, anyway. It has no effect on how we prepare or how we'll play."

Tight end Orson Mobley likes the underdog role.

"There's no pressure on you when you're the underdog," said Mobley, recalling Denver was a field-goal favorite over Washington, but conveniently forgetting it was an underdog against the Giants.

"Everybody is picking San Francisco to win," he said. "All we've got to do is go play. All of the pressure is on them."

Montana is Joe Cool

Pressure? The San Francisco Joe Montanas can't spell the word.

"We've got the man who can handle that situation," said coach George Seifert. "He's

Continued Page 13

Denver on offense

OFFENSE

Kicker

9 David Treadwell

Punter

2 Mike Horan

Holder

8 Gary Kubiak

2 Mike Horan



FB
32 Melvin Bratton
40 Jeff Alexander



QB
7 John Elway
8 Gary Kubiak



RB
26 Bobby Humphrey
23 Sammy Winder
30 Steve Sewell
35 Ken Bell

Kick center

54 Keith Bishop
72 Keith Kartz

Punt returner

82 Vance Johnson
84 Ricky Nattiel

Kick returner

35 Ken Bell
29 Darren Carrington

WR
80 Mark Jackson
83 Michael Young
35 Ken Bell



TE
88 Clarence Kay
89 Orson Mobley
87 Pat Kelly



RT
76 Ken Lanier
66 Jim Juriga



RG
67 Doug Widell
65 Monte Smith



C
72 Keith Kartz
57 Mike Ruether



LG
66 Jim Juriga
54 Keith Bishop



LT
60 Gerald Perry
66 Jim Juriga



WR
82 Vance Johnson
84 Ricky Nattiel
30 Steve Sewell

DEFENSE



LC
26 Darryl Pollard
22 Tim McKyer



LE
78 Pierce Holt
91 Larry Roberts



NT
64 Jim Burt
67 Pete Kugler



RE
75 Kevin Fagan
96 Daniel Stubbs



RC
29 Don Griffin
21 Eric Wright



LOLB
94 Charles Haley
96 Daniel Stubbs
98 Antonio Goss



LILB
54 Matt Millen
59 Keith DeLong
56 Steve Hendrickson



RILB
99 Michael Walter
59 Keith DeLong
56 Steve Hendrickson



ROLB
58 Keena Turner
53 Bill Romanowski
98 Antonio Goss



FS
42 Ronnie Lott
46 Tom Holmoe



SS
31 Chet Brooks
40 Johnny Jackson

San Francisco on offense

OFFENSE

Kicker

6 Mike Cofer

Punter

9 Barry Helton

Holder

9 Barry Helton



FB
44 Tom Rathman
30 Keith Henderson
23 Spencer Tillman



QB
16 Joe Montana
8 Steve Young
13 Steve Bono



RB
33 Roger Craig
32 Terrence Flagler
23 Spencer Tillman



FL
80 Jerry Rice
88 Mike Sherrard



SE
82 John Taylor
85 Mike Wilson



RT
79 Harris Barton
74 Steve Wallace



RG
69 Bruce Collie
66 Terry Tausch
60 Chuck Thomas



C
61 Jesse Sapolu
60 Chuck Thomas



LG
62 Guy McIntyre
66 Terry Tausch
60 Chuck Thomas



LT
77 Wm. "Bubba" Paris
74 Steve Wallace



TE
84 Brent Jones
89 Wesley Walls
81 Jamie Williams

DEFENSE



LCB
34 Tyrone Braxton
36 Mark Haynes



LOLB
56 Michael Brooks
59 Tim Lucas



LE
92 Alphonso Carreker
91 Warren Powers
68 Brad Henke



NT
71 Greg Kragen
68 Brad Henke



RE
90 Ron Holmes
61 Andre Townsend



ROLB
73 Simon Fletcher
97 Bruce Klostermann



RCB
24 Wymon Henderson
29 Darren Carrington



SS
49 Dennis Smith
48 Randy Robbins



LILB
55 Rick Dennison
51 Marc Munford
58 Scott Curtis



RILB
77 Karl Mecklenburg
55 Rick Dennison



FS
27 Steve Atwater
25 Kip Corrington

49ers vs. Broncos

By JOHN DELCOS

WHEN THE 49ERS HAVE THE BALL

Statistically, Joe Montana had the best season of his career. Sure, he's the NFL's all-time leading passer, but you can't measure greatness by the numbers. Montana is coolness personified, a pickpocket working a party. He's on the bench sipping Gatorade before the defense realizes the damage he's done. But the Rams know. He completed 26-of-30 for 262 yards and two touchdowns in the NFC Championship.

Montana has always been blessed with the parts. Roger Craig had 1,527 yards from scrimmage and FB Tom Rathman led the league with 73 receptions.

Numbers also don't tell the full story about Jerry Rice. He led the league with 1,483 yards and 17 touchdowns on 82 receptions. On the other side is John Taylor, who added 60 catches for 1,077 yards and two touchdowns.

The line has been retooled on the run and is considered a strength. Tackles William Paris and Harris Barton, guards Bruce Collier and Guy McIntyre, and center Jesse Sapolu are first rate.

WHEN THE BRONCOS HAVE THE BALL

His name is synonymous with his team: John Elway equals the Denver Broncos. He has been "The Franchise" since 1983, but ironically, in what has been an off-year for the 29-year old quarterback, the Broncos are sending their best team to the Super Bowl.

Elway, the third player in NFL history (Dan Marino and Boomer Esiason are the others) with five straight 3,000-yard passing seasons, is the prototype: arm, mobility, coolness under fire, the ability to read coverages and change plays. The only thing missing is a ring.

Also missing, at least until this season, was a complementary running game. Rookie Bobby Humphrey is the Broncos' fifth 1,000-yard rusher, and first since Sammy Winder in 1984. He provides outside speed and is dangerous as an outlet receiver, while another rookie, Mel Bratton, shares fullback duties with Winder.

You don't hear much about the Three Amigos anymore — it's now a party of one. There has been little production after Vance Johnson's 76 receptions for 1,095 yards and seven touchdowns. Mark Jackson — who caught the game-tying touchdown in "The Drive" against Cleveland — slumped to 28 catches for 446 yards, but has nine in the playoffs.

KEY MATCHUPS

BRONCOS QB JOHN ELWAY vs. 49ERS DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR BILL MCPHERSON

It's the fourth quarter and the Cleveland Browns have erased a 17-point lead, pulling within 24-21. On third-and-10, Elway is flushed out of the pocket to his left, and with bone-breakers Michael Dean Perry and Al Baker a fingernail away, he flicks the ball 20 yards to his right to Johnson. That ability will give McPherson headaches all day.

BRONCOS C KEITH KARTZ vs. 49ERS NTs JIM BURT and MICHAEL CARTER

The Broncos controlled the ball in the second half against Pittsburgh and Cleveland. To establish the run, the push begins here. If Kartz dominates, it means San Francisco's linebackers won't get a clean shot at Humphrey until he's three yards past the line. If the opposite happens, Humphrey will be stuffed at the line and the Broncos will face long-yardage passing situations.

BRONCOS RB BOBBY HUMPHREY vs. 49ERS LBs MATT MILLEN and MICHAEL WALTER

The best defense against Joe Montana is to keep him off the field. A big game from Humphrey is almost as important as a big game from Elway. As he did against the Browns, Elway might be able to improvise on third downs. However, like all quarterbacks, he's more lethal when he dictates the play, which he can do on third-and-two.

BRONCOS WRs VANCE JOHNSON and MARK JACKSON vs. 49ERS S RONNIE LOTT, and CBs DARRYL POLLARD and DON GRIFFIN

Jackson needs a big game to draw double coverage away from Johnson. As Cleveland's Frank Minnifield and Hanford Dixon learned, don't concede the run too early to Elway or he'll strike deep. Cornerbacks, fearing Elway's mobility, often commit to run support when he scrambles. With his arm, the danger is he can stop at the line and throw a pass 60 yards downfield.

49ERS QB JOE MONTANA vs. BRONCOS DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR WADE PHILLIPS

There's not much Montana hasn't seen, so the Broncos aren't going to fool him with coverages. What Phillips has to do is develop a rush and blitz package that will confuse the blockers. As good as he is, Montana can't throw on his back.

49ERS C JESSE SAPOLU vs. BRONCOS NT GREG KRAGEN

It's basic football — the ability to run is dictated by this matchup. If Montana is faced with constant third-and-sevens, the Broncos have a chance. If Roger Craig is running well, it opens up the 49ers' play-action passing and throwing on first down. Give Montana short-yardage all the time, and Denver's defense becomes a buffet table — take a little of this, a little of that.

49ERS WRs JERRY RICE and JOHN TAYLOR vs. BRONCOS CBs TYRONE BRAXTON and MARK HAYNES

Stopping Rice and Taylor is like catching rain in a bucket. You'll get a few drops, but

you'll also get wet. Denver must mix its bump-and-run and zone coverages to make Rice and Taylor work to get open. Another variable in containing the 49ers' passing is to get deep support from S Dennis Smith and for the linebackers to make tackles on short crossing patterns (missed tackles enabled Taylor to break two 90-yard touchdown receptions against the Rams).

49ERS OFFENSIVE LINE vs. BRONCOS PASS RUSH

The Broncos' 47 sacks (second in the AFC) came from a variety of sources: 12 from LOLB Simon Fletcher, nine from RDE Ron Holmes, 7 1/2 from LILB Karl Mecklenburg. The 49ers stopped Minnesota's pass rush by getting ahead early and staying in short-yardage situations. If they do that again, it could mean another rout — and a fourth championship.

EXTRA POINTS

RECORDS: **Denver** — Won the AFC Western Division for the third time in four years at 11-5. Defeated Pittsburgh, 24-23, and Cleveland, 37-21, in the AFC playoffs. **San Francisco** — Won its fourth straight NFC Western Division title at 14-2. Routed Minnesota, 31-13, and Los Angeles, 30-3, in the NFC playoffs.

COACHES: **Denver** — Dan Reeves is the winningest coach in franchise history with a 90-54-1 record (.622), including 5-4 in the postseason. He has taken the Broncos to the playoffs in five of his nine seasons. **San Francisco** — George Seifert was named head coach following Bill Walsh's retirement. He was the defensive coordinator from 1983-88 after three years as secondary coach.

DENVER LEADERS: **Passing** — John Elway (223/416 (53.6), 3,051 yds, 18 TDs, 18 INT, 73.7 rating). **Rushing** — Bobby Humphrey (294/1,151 yds, 7 TDs); Sammy Winder (110/351 yds, 2 TDs). **Receiving** — Vance Johnson (76/1,095 yds (14.4), 7 TDs); Mark Jackson (28/446 yds (15.9), 2 TDs).

SAN FRANCISCO LEADERS: **Passing** — Joe Montana (271/386 (70.2), 3,521 yds, 26 TDs, 8 INT, 112.4 rating). **Rushing** — Roger Craig (271/1,054 yds, 6 TDs); Tom Rathman (79/305 yds, 1 TD). **Receiving** — Jerry Rice (82/1,483 yds (18.1), 17 TDs); Rathman (73/616 yds (8.4), 1 TD); John Taylor (60/1,077 yds (18.0), 10 TDs).

DENVER INJURIES: LB Scott Curtis (back), CB Wymon Henderson (shoulder), DE Ron Holmes (knee), OT Ken Lanier (back), WR Rick Nattiel (knee), S Dennis Smith (groin), OT Gerald Perry (ankle).

SAN FRANCISCO INJURIES: FB Keith Henderson (neck), S Tom Holmoe (knee), CB Tim McKyer (groin), OT Steve Wallace (calk).

DENVER STAT FACTS: Defense 1st in AFC in scoring (226 points) and against rush (98.8 yds a game), and 2nd overall (275.4 yds). . . . Offense 7th overall (318.3), 4th rushing (130.8) and 11th passing (187.6). . . . Had 1,000-yard rusher and receiver, and 3,000-yard passer for first time. . . . Johnson first Bronco to have 70 receptions since Lionel Taylor in 1965. . . . K David Treadwell led AFC with 120 points.

SAN FRANCISCO STAT FACTS: Led NFL with 442 points, in total offense (391.8) and passing (268.9). . . . Montana's 112.4 rating broke old mark of 110.4 set by Cleveland's Milt Plum in 1960. . . . K Mike Cofer led NFL with 136 points. . . . Turnover ratio of plus 12 was second in NFL.



49ers wide receiver Jerry Rice





BEAR REPORT



The Official Call

Refs also earn Super Bowl berth

Here we go sports fans! The three teams are on the field. The Super Bowl is about to begin!

The preparations that will bring these three teams to New Orleans Sunday began just as soon as last season ended. Training camps for the teams opened in July, but each man started his personal training long before then. For the top NFL performers, training is maintained 12 months a year.

No, that isn't a mistake. I do mean three teams. The crew of officials is the third team on the field. Just as the players had to earn

In these sessions, the highlights films from last season are brought out. Each man shows his film and explains his calls. The other men in the group pick him apart. (There's no place in the NFL officiating corps for a self-conscious person). The films of the men who worked the last Super Bowl are carefully watched by everyone. This shows the others how the League wants things done. The good official will pick up on the little things to improve his style. Art McNally, supervisor of NFL officials, believes these sessions are "one of the best learning experiences".

Filled with all their knowledge, the officials start working games. By the third pre-season game, the crews are together as they will be for the rest of the season. During the next 18 weeks (with two weekends off), the crews work as a team. Each man works to do the best job he can and make his crew look good, too.

Each week, each official receives feedback on his last performance. The crew is required to be in the city of the game by 3 p.m. Saturday for a Sunday game. Saturday night from 6 to 10 p.m. is spent reviewing the film of the last game. The film shows every play from an end zone view and a side-line view. Along with the film is a report card. Every man is graded on every play. Position, mechanics and judgement are considered.

At the end of the season, the top 2/3 of the men at each position, based on their grades, are chosen for the playoffs. The Super Bowl officials are the top-graded men at each position. They are not informed at this time, though. They only find that out on Tuesday after the AFC and NFC championship games — the calls are made to the chosen few.

To be selected to officiate the Super Bowl is what every NFL official strives for. It gives the same excitement and sense of achievement as playing in the Super Bowl does for the players. It also requires the same commitment and sacrifice.

When you watch your next Super Bowl, keep this in mind. All three teams deserve the cheers.

Jeffrey Leaf is an official and rules interpreter for the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference and a member of the National Association of Sports Officials.

You can direct your questions on football rules and officiating to him by writing to 'The Official Call', PO Box 773, Annandale, VA 22003.

JEFFREY LEAF



their place in the Super Bowl, so did the officials.

The officials' training begins about seven weeks after the previous season ends. The NFL office makes a highlights film for each official. All of an individual official's tough calls, controversial calls and mistakes for the season are pulled together. The official receives the film without any comments. He writes the script of the film. He uses the journal he kept during the season to describe each highlighted play. What were the circumstances? Why did he call it the way he did? Was he right? When his script is complete, he sends a copy to his supervisor in the NFL office. He also sends the film and script to another official to review.

The rule changes for the upcoming season are published in March. The officials receive them in April. In May, a 200-question test arrives in each man's mailbox. The questions are all play situations. Only, the situations are more complicated than anything that usually happens in real life. The test is completed and returned to the League office for grading.

Officials play both ways

Physical conditioning is a major part of officiating, also. Remember, officials play both ways. They don't rest when the ball changes hands. Imagine running seven miles on artificial turf in 98-degree heat over a three-hour period. One official I know runs five days a week at 5 a.m., starting four months before the season begins.

In July, just after the teams go to training camp, the officials go to camp, too. Their camp is four days of football officiating via intravenous feeding. Everything from travel arrangements and uniform requirements to unwritten rules interpretations is covered.

Rules get a thorough review. The changes for the new season are presented in detail. Old rules and especially mistakes made during the prior season are studied.

Camp features group sessions

The officials spend a great deal of time in group sessions. All the men who work the same position meet together. They discuss rule interpretations, unwritten rules and officiating mechanics that apply to them.

IRON MIKE TOSSED INTO THE FIRE.



Don't miss this hilarious roast of our favorite coach, Mike Ditka, with emcee Tom Dreesen.

March 24, 1990

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Bear Notebook

Anderson will sit out Pro Bowl

Running back **Neal Anderson** will skip the Pro Bowl Feb. 4 after having surgery on his injured finger earlier this month.

Anderson broke his left index finger in the middle of the season but managed to not miss a game, anyway. He was selected as a starter for the Pro Bowl but chose to have the surgery done immediately after the season to give him an extra month to heal during the off-season. It also could help his bargaining power after Feb. 1 when he becomes a free agent.

"I had two choices regarding the surgery," Anderson said. "Either do it now and let it start healing, or wait until after the Pro Bowl and delay my off-season training for about a month. I thought it was a little more important to get it taken care of now."

The finger was a burden to Anderson during the season. "I had no feeling in my finger and I had to get it shot up before each game over the last eight weeks of the season," Anderson said. "The finger was dislocated and broken at the knuckle. That made it hard to catch the ball and take the handoff to run with it. Hopefully, I'll be in position to make the Pro Bowl team again in coming years."

Anderson said he would like to remain a Bear but hasn't ruled out signing with another team. If Anderson does sign with another team after Feb. 1, the Bears would still have the chance to match the offer and keep Anderson. Or they could let Anderson go and get compensation from the team signing him, which most likely would be two first-round draft picks.

Tampa Bay and Miami reportedly are interested in Anderson. He grew up in Graceville, Fla. and played college football at the University of Florida.

But Anderson has an off-season home in the Chicago area and said, "That kind of proves what I think of Chicago and the people here."

The Bears attempted to sign Anderson before the 1989 season, but both sides agreed to postpone talks until after the season.

•**DEFENSIVE TACKLE DAN HAMPTON** continues his rehabilitation from two knee surgeries and says he feels now the way he usually does in May or June. He's maintaining that 1990 will be his last season in the NFL.

•**ONCE AGAIN MIKE DITKA** has given defensive tackle **William Perry** an ultimatum regarding Perry's weight — either be down to 300 pounds by training camp, or he's out.

Yes, we've heard this before. But could it be that maybe, just maybe, Ditka means it this time?

"He'll weigh 300 pounds or he will not put on a Bear uniform," Ditka said on his WBBM-TV show earlier this month. "He knows that and we know that. It's all been agreed to, so everything's on target."

The Bears have tried just about every possible tactic to get Perry to lose weight. But so far nothing has worked. Perry reportedly weighed around 360 pounds at the end of this season.

This off-season it will be even tougher for Perry to lose weight. He won't be able to work out as hard because he's rehabilitating from knee surgery in December.

Since he became a Bear in 1985, the closest Perry has come to weighing 300 pounds was 310 in his rookie season.

Meanwhile, on his radio show Ditka said he's willing to give up doing commercial endorsements if that's what Bears' president **Michael McCaskey** wants him to do.

"I never did a commercial during the season. I do it in the off-season, period," Ditka said on WGN-Radio. "I don't need the money, you're right. As far as I'm concerned, I'm not looking for anything. I never went out and tried to get one endorsement. I never went out and solicited one thing. People came to me. But it was all done in the off-season. Going back to basics (in 1990) has nothing to do with that. But if it means that, then I'll quit doing that."

"Now, I have some (endorsement) commitments that run for a couple of years with a couple of people which I intend to fulfill the obligation with. If they say, 'We don't want to' tomorrow, I would walk away from it, regardless of whether it meant money or not. And I think that is what people don't understand."

•**EVEN IF HE IMMEDIATELY STOPPED** doing commercials, Ditka would still be on the TV. He did analysis work with CBS-TV for the NFC Championship Game and will provide more commentary during the Super Bowl.

Many observers view Ditka's appearances with CBS as an on-air audition to become a color commentator with the network after his coaching contract runs out at the end of the 1990 season.

Neither McCaskey nor Ditka have expressed any interest yet in seeking an extension on his contract.

•**DITKA SAID HE WANTS THE BEARS** to rotate fewer people in and out of the lineup next season, especially the wide receivers. Ditka said it may be harder for receivers to establish any consistency on the field when they're only playing every other series of downs.

The Bears started rotating their receivers like that because they believed all of them had equal talent. But that may no longer be the case.

•**LINEBACKER JIM MORRISSEY IS DOING** well in his comeback from a lacerated kidney last season. He said he hopes to add more weight and show up at training camp at 230 pounds, which would be his highest weight ever.

•**AS PLAYERS LEFT HALAS HALL** immediately after the season ended, they said Ditka emphasized in his season-ending team address the need to work out harder under supervision at Halas Hall.

"It will be interesting to see how many players we have working out here in the off-season," center **Jay Hilgenberg** said. "I have a feeling we'll have a lot. The last couple of years I think the only people we've had up here consistently have been the offensive linemen. If you look over the record, the guys who have been working out here have been a lot more injury free than the others."

Morrissey said Ditka told the team there wouldn't be a major changeover in personnel before next season. "He told us the team is here. This is going to be the nucleus," Morrissey said.

•**OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR GREG LANDRY** said he isn't actively looking for a new job, despite what CBS commentator **John Madden** said during the Bears-49ers game Christmas Eve.

•**FORMER BEARS GREAT AND** Hall of Famer **Bronko Nagurski** died of natural causes earlier this month at Falls Memorial Hospital at International Falls, Minn.

Nagurski had been hospitalized for a week and had been living at an International Falls nursing home for the past year.

Nagurski, a fullback for the Bears from 1930-37 and in 1943, was a charter member of the NFL's Hall of Fame.

•**KEVIN BUTLER IS SPENDING** the first

part of his off-season playing soccer.

He's been practicing with the Chicago Power of the American Indoor Soccer Association and planned on playing in the Power's game against the Milwaukee Wave Jan. 22.

"I've always loved soccer and played it in the off-season, and I thought this would be a great chance to stay in shape and promote the game at the same time," Butler said.

Butler initially is planning on being used as a one-on-one shootout specialist before getting any field playing time.

He said he isn't worried about the Bears possibly objecting to his latest endeavor. "Other guys play basketball in the off-season, so I don't think they'll mind. If they do, I guess I'll find out pretty soon," he said.

•**THE BEARS ANNOUNCED JIM DOOLEY**, after spending 28 years with the organization, is retiring. Dooley was a player, assistant coach and head coach with the Bears during that span. Since 1983, he was in charge of research and quality control for the Bears.

Defensive backfield coach **Jim LaRue** will take over for Dooley in that position. That leaves the Bears with a vacancy at defensive secondary coach.

Dooley played nine seasons with the Bears as a defensive back and flanker starting in 1952. He was a Bears' assistant coach from 1963-67 and head coach from 1969-71, compiling a 20-36 record. He then rejoined the team in 1983.

Preview

Continued From Page 7

as good as there is in football, as good as there has ever been."

Montana's coolness and confidence — never to be mistaken for cockiness — permeates throughout the team. The 49ers have been here before; they know the right things to say.

"I don't care what happened in the past," tackle **Bubba Paris** said. "Nobody does. We feel we have everything to prove."

If the 49ers win, they'll become the first team since Pittsburgh a decade ago to repeat as NFL champion. This season's motivation is Seifert.

Bill Walsh's "genius" label overshadowed

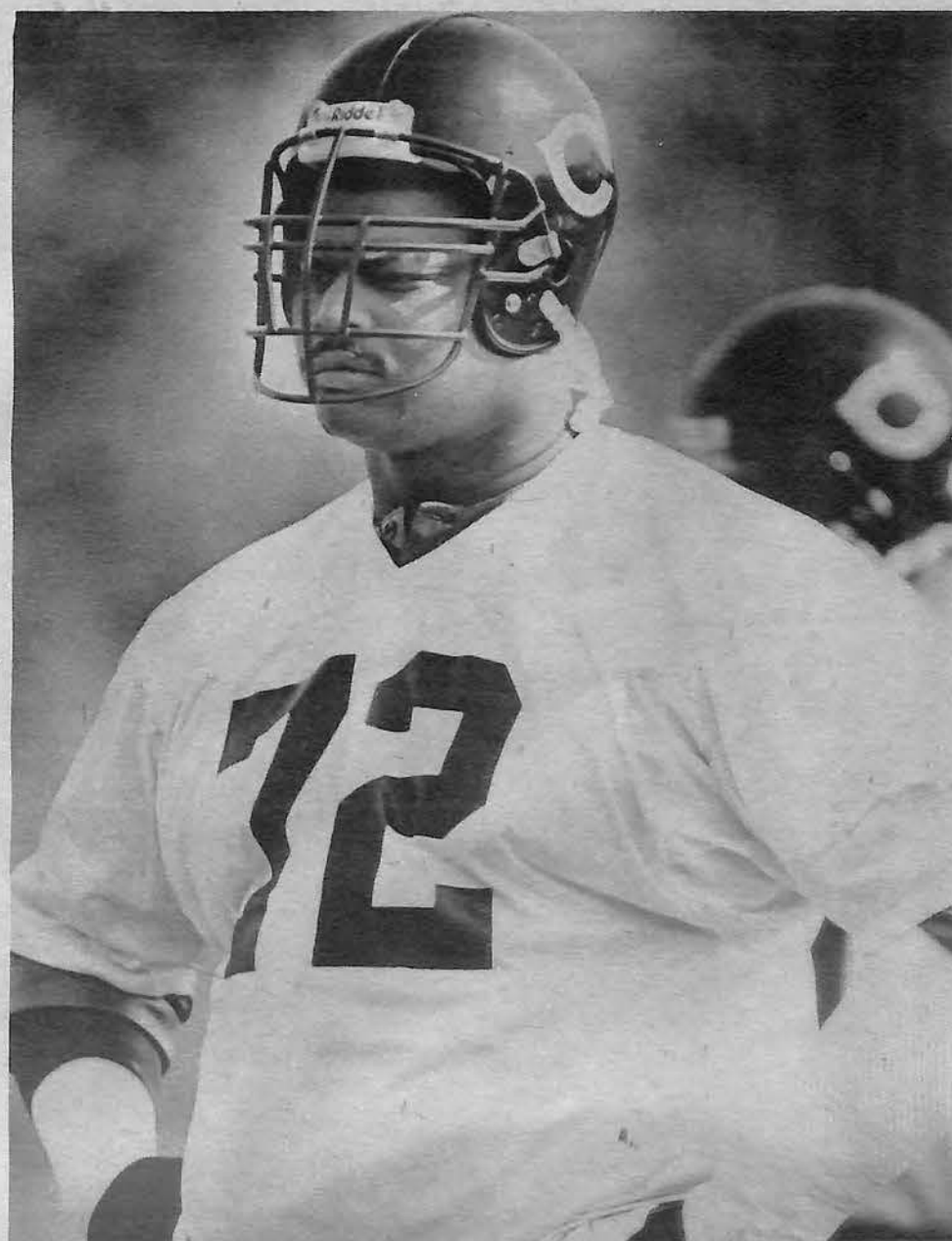
the accomplishments of his players, save Montana and Jerry Rice, and the team wants to prove it isn't a collection of Walsh puppets.

Montana, coming off one of the best seasons ever — he completed 70 percent of his passes for 3,521 yards, 26 touchdowns, only eight interceptions and an 112.4 efficiency rating — is quick to pass the credit. After the 49ers routed the Rams 30-3 in the NFC Championship, Montana said he was just a piece of the puzzle.

Montana praised the offensive line, the receivers, the running backs, Seifert, offensive coordinator **Mike Holmgren** and Walsh. He may have missed a hot dog vendor.

The team takes its cue from Montana. They know what it takes to win.

They're still searching for answers in Denver.



If William Perry isn't down to 300 pounds by the start of training camp, Mike Ditka said he won't be allowed to put on a Bear uniform.
(Bear Report photo by Steve Woltmann)

Central Issues

by John Delcos

Ups and downs of '89 season



Detroit Lions

THE HIGHS: They finished the season with a five-game winning streak, their longest since 1970. ... The emergence of rookies **Barry Sanders** and **Rodney Peete**. ... **K Eddie Murray** made 20-of-21 field-goal attempts for the second straight year to make the Pro Bowl. ... Free agents: **QB Bob Gagliano**, **WR Richard Johnson** and **PR Walter Stanley** made significant contributions.

THE LOWS: The Silver Stretch still has a lot of bugs. ... **DE Keith Ferguson** missed the season with an ankle injury. ... **Peete** played well but was constantly injured. ... Lion quarterbacks threw only 11 touchdown passes.

OUTLOOK: There are a lot of holes, but there's reason for optimism. ... **Coach Wayne Fontes** likes **Peete**, but quarterback is wide open. ... With progress comes a stronger schedule.

NON-DIVISION SCHEDULE: New Orleans, Atlanta, New York Giants, Washington, Denver, Kansas City, Los Angeles Raiders, Seattle.



Green Bay Packers

THE HIGHS: The Packers improved six games, from 4-12 to 10-6, with only two new starters. ... **QB Don Majkowski** picked up **coach Lindy Infante's** complex system and will go to the Pro Bowl. ... When he gets there, he'll be throwing to **WR Sterling Sharpe**, who had 90 receptions and 12 touchdowns. ... **LB Tim Harris** had 19 1/2 sacks.

THE LOWS: No. 1 pick **OT Tony Mandarich** played sparingly. ... The defense fell from seventh to 16th. ... **WR Erik Afholter** missed the entire season with an ankle injury. ... **Majkowski** is one of 28 veterans who'll become free agents.

OUTLOOK: Next year's schedule will be a killer. ... The Packers snuck up on the league with their propensity for rallying at the wire. Three victories were because controversial rulings on fourth down went their way. They might not get the breaks next year.

NON-DIVISION SCHEDULE: San Francisco, Los Angeles Rams, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Denver, Kansas City, Los Angeles Raiders, Seattle.



Minnesota Vikings

THE HIGHS: The defense was the NFL's best for the second straight year and increased its sacks from 37 to 71. ... **DE Chris Doleman** led the NFL with 21 sacks, and **DT Keith Millard** added 18. ... Seven players will go to the Pro Bowl. ... **K Rich Karlis** converted 31 of 39 field-goal attempts and had games of seven and five field goals.

THE LOWS: The **Herschel Walker** trade hasn't panned out, but it's not a total bust yet. The Vikings are hoping a full training camp with the system will help. ... A 2-6 road record. ... **QB Wade Wilson** was the NFC's top passer in 1988 but ranked ahead of only Dallas rookies **Troy Aikman** and **Steve Walsh** in 1989. ... **WR Anthony Carter** and **TE Steve Jordan** had off-years following holdouts. ... **Doleman** wants out. ... As good as he is, **S Joey Browner** is rapidly becoming a team cancer.

OUTLOOK: High draft picks are scarce because of the **Walker** trade. ... For all its talent, this team lacks something and it's possible the Vikings best chance of winning has past.

NON-DIVISION SCHEDULE: San Francisco, New Orleans, New York Giants, Philadelphia, Denver, Los Angeles Raiders, Kansas City, Seattle.



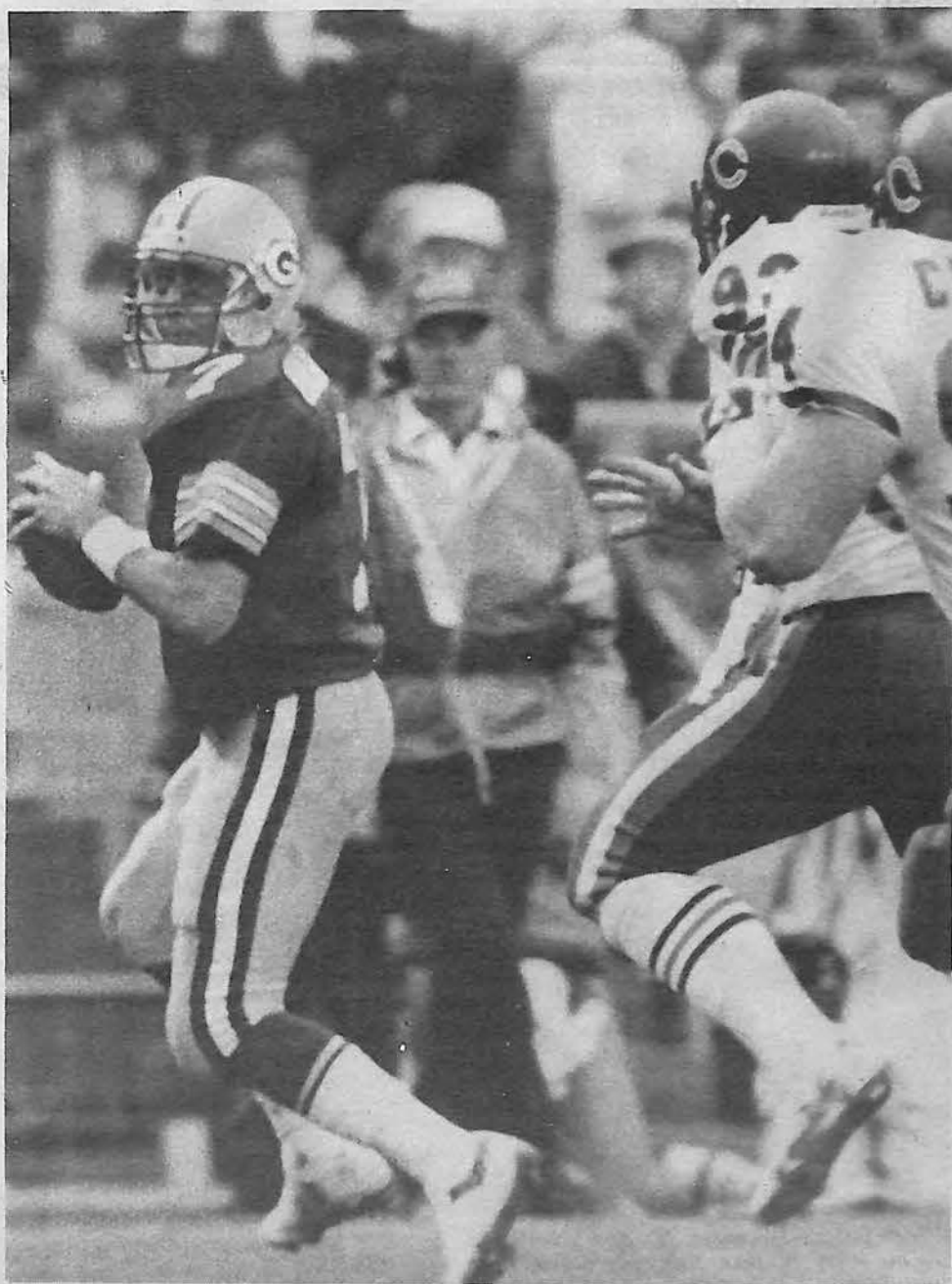
Tampa Bay Buccaneers

THE HIGHS: Sweeping Chicago, but then again, how good were the Bears? ... **WR Mark Carrier** should've gone to the Pro Bowl. ... **QB Vinny Testaverde** drastically cut his interception rate.

THE LOWS: The defense was ranked 27th, and first-round **LB Broderick Thomas** couldn't even start. ... Progress has been minimal. ... **RB Lars Tate** had a poor second season.

OUTLOOK: Not enough progress was made to give any indication the Bucs are ready to become a consistently competitive team.

NON-DIVISION SCHEDULE: Dallas (twice), San Francisco, Los Angeles Rams, New Orleans, Atlanta, San Diego, New York Jets.



Packers' quarterback Don Majkowski came out of nowhere to become one of the top quarterbacks in the league in 1989. (Bear Report photo by David J. Garot)

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Finding good in bad season

The season started with so much promise. When the Bears won their first four games, they had a big goal behind them. They had beaten three teams from the '88 playoffs.

"We felt once we got past the first four, the rest of the schedule would be — whew," linebacker Mike Singletary said. "I think we took too many things for granted."

KEVIN LAMB



They thought they would keep scoring more than 30 points a game. They thought they would keep forcing enough turnovers to make up for the ranches of acreage they were allowing. Even in those first four games, they didn't really stop anybody from moving the ball. They just took it away. "As I look back now, it was just inevitable as to what would happen," Singletary said.

He was concerned even then. Nobody took him seriously, of course. Singletary tends to worry, and after all, the Bears were beating good teams.

"The scary thing was, what happens when we don't get the turnovers?" he said. "Our

offense was scoring a lot of points, but we were giving them great field position. We perceived things wrong. We felt we were going to keep getting turnovers and scoring a lot of points."

But it didn't happen. The turnovers slowed down. The defensive line lost Dan Hampton and, briefly, Richard Dent to injuries. The pass rush slowed down. The Bears' defense without a pass rush was a shark without teeth. Offenses started hooking them on worms.

Signs appear in Houston game

The first obvious danger signs were in the Houston game. They still weren't overpowering, though. The Bears were still 4-2. They led the league in scoring. They could bounce back. They had lost games before, hadn't they?

Not this way. Houston beat them 33-28 when they blew a nine-point lead in the last five minutes. This was Bo Derek losing a part on looks, Columbo being outwitted, James Bond stammering.

"I don't know if we're capable of winning another football game," coach Mike Ditka said that Sunday. "I don't think we are."

He was wrong. The Bears won two more football games. They lost eight more.

"We had the Houston game won, and we gave it away," wide receiver Glen Kozlowski said. "I think from there, it just slowly snowballed. We started doubting ourselves."

The snowball might even have started rolling a week earlier, at Tampa Bay. The Bears began the game at 4-0 with 12 straight wins

against the Bucs. They ended it as 42-35 losers, giving up their most points in eight years and 115 games. "I think that's when other people started looking at film of us and getting confident," center Jay Hilgenberg said.

They didn't know it then, but besides losing Hampton to knee surgery that week, the Bears also lost quarterback Mike Tomczak, figuratively at least. He did recover from his shoulder bruise, but not from the bruise on his psyche. Tampa Bay began a seven-week stretch when Tomczak was replaced in three games and benched for three others. He was never again the consistent big-play man who had led his team to 4-0.

It's harder to play offense without a defense that can stop everybody. Risks don't come so comfortably. And big plays don't come so often without risks. "As a team, I think we didn't really rally around the quarterbacks like we should have," Singletary said.

Bears still in good shape

The unraveling wasn't immediate. The defense had a mid-season stretch where it allowed only 24 points in three games. The Bears were 6-4, would have been 7-3 but for a replay official's overturned call that overturned a victory at Green Bay.

"We played good enough at times to beat anybody in the league," halfback Neal Anderson said. "On the other hand, we played bad enough to get beat by anybody in the league."

In their 11th game, the Bears played well enough to overtake Tampa Bay with three touchdowns in three minutes, and badly enough to lose a third game in its final moments. For five years, they had been known for protecting leads, winning close games and roughing up their division, and the second Tampa Bay loss meant they could do none of those things.

They also had avoided prolonged slumps for five years. Most teams have them every year. They learn to snap out of them. This was new for the Bears, though. When they had lost five of seven games, they didn't know what to do.

"Any time you start to lose," Anderson said, "you start to question yourself. You question your team. You question your coaching philosophy. Everybody's looking for the reason."

Too much negativism

Singletary remembers talking often with Steve McMichael. What are we going to do? When is this going to end? That sort of thing. They groped for answers.

"Toward the end of the season, there was so much negativism that people didn't really see the Bears," Singletary said. "They saw a team that was shocked, hurt, embar-

assed and a lot of other things.

"As the season went on, we were negative, and I think we panicked. I felt panic. I couldn't believe it."

They never learned how to deal with defeat, linebacker Ron Rivera said. "It used to be when we were down 10 points, we just knew we were going to win. Now we get down seven points and we're not sure if we can win."

The Bears didn't throw themselves at opponents anymore. They played as if walking through a dark room. "It's almost like we don't expect to win anymore," Ditka said. "We expect the bad things to happen." Without their shield of confidence, the once-bold Bears were merely bowled over.

"I saw a lack of aggressiveness and daring, and that bothered me," Ditka said as the season was ending. "Not only on defense, but I saw it where we weren't sure we could make the play we had to make on offense. We couldn't make the play on defense when we had to make it to stop people. Which had been our trademark."

Ditka saw those things so vividly in the 12th game, he said something about them. The Redskins had scored 23 points in their three previous games, but they outscored the Bears 38-14 and began a winning streak.

He wasn't trying to motivate anyone. He was waving a white flag, not a red one. The Bears would play for the division lead one week later, but Ditka knew it was over. Once again, he said he didn't think they would win another game.

Looking on the bright side

This time, he was right. They didn't win again. They missed the playoffs for the first time in six years, missed them by so much, there was no deluding themselves. Singletary moped for a while. It wasn't right, New Year's Day approaching and no game to prepare for. But he cheered up soon. These things happen for a reason, he decided.

"Let's say we get to the playoffs this year but we struggle to get there," he said. "And we lose the first game. Then we say, 'Well, we got to the playoffs,' and for a lot of people, that's good enough. I'm tired of that. I want to go all the way. I want to do it right."

"So now there is a sense of urgency, of hey, we've got to do something. We've got to work. If this is what it takes to get to that point, then it's all right. I think in life, sometimes you need a setback — in our situation, a big setback — in order to be awakened out of complacency or an apathetic attitude, like just enough to get by."

"We have to get our attitude back. I can't wait to play these guys. We are the Bears. I'm ready for you. Bring it on. Let's see what you've got. I'm really excited about working hard this offseason and getting that back."



Mike Singletary believes it might have been best the Bears didn't make the playoffs in 1989 to wake up the team to what needs to be done to get back to the top.



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Same old McMahon

In San Diego, he's still mad at everything

Life after Jim McMahon for the Bears proved to be an unpleasant experience. Life after the Bears for Jim McMahon was equally discomfiting. I know. I was there covering the Chargers for the Los Angeles Times San Diego County Edition in 1989.

Oddly enough, nine days after the Bears ended the death march that was their 6-10 1989 season, former quarterback McMahon showed up at the team's Halas Hall headquarters looking for a racquetball game.

McMahon had just finished a grim season with the 6-10 Chargers. He spent the last four games on the bench there watching a personable and talented rookie quarterback named Billy Joe Tolliver convince Charger coach Dan Henning that McMahon is not the quarterback of the Chargers' future.

Bear coach Mike Ditka was in his office when McMahon showed up. But witnesses say the two men did not bump into each other in the hallway. Oh, to have been a fly on the wall if they had.

BRIAN HEWITT



Jim McMahon

ly lost his job to Tolliver. By Week 13 he had lost the starting job for good. The day after the Chargers' 10-7 loss in Seattle Oct. 29 McMahon refused to answer questions about the repeated failures of the Chargers' two-minute offense.

When reporters persisted, he got downright snotty.

Yes, I was there in the locker room that day when McMahon blew his nose in the direction of a San Diego Union sportswriter. As he headed toward the shower, McMahon looked over his shoulder and hissed, "There's an answer for you."

This was precisely the kind of behavior that made McMahon's nihilistic and monstrously self-serving autobiography a national best-seller in 1986. And this was precisely the sort of behavior that turned San Diego off on McMahon in a hurry.

To Charger fans he was a quarterback who was injured a lot, didn't throw the ball as well as recently-retired Dan Fouts and wasn't rescuing their team from the mediocrity it had been drowning in since the early 80s.

One former local Congressman wrote a scathing guest editorial in the San Diego Tribune nominating McMahon for the "Hall of Phlegm." A sports columnist for the same newspaper referred to McMucous . . . er . . . McMahon as Henning's "Chief of Nasal

Operations."

When the season ended McMahon couldn't get back to his suburban Chicago home fast enough. Meanwhile, Henning gathered reporters together for a lunch during which he told them McMahon would have to settle for a lower base salary in 1990 than the \$800,000 the Chargers paid him in 1989, the last year of his current contract. If McMahon won back the starting job, Henning said, there would be plenty incentives in his next contract to make up for cut in his base salary.

McMahon's agent, Steve Zucker, responded to Henning's remarks by saying, "That's not the general manager talking, that's the coach."

"Jim's very happy in San Diego," Zucker added. "He wants to stay there."

But by the end of the season McMahon was sitting at the end of the bench. During late-game timeouts he stayed there. His lack

of participation in sideline strategy huddles did not go unnoticed.

Jim McMahon is a rebel without a cause. He may also be a rebel without much of a future. He says he doesn't have many friends. But, he says, the friends he has are good ones. If you are not his friend, he says, he doesn't care about you or what you think.

When he is finished playing football, all the fools he has not suffered gladly won't care about him or about what he thinks. What goes around comes around.

Sure the Bears floundered without McMahon in 1989. But the loss that really hurt was the knee problem that forced defensive lineman Dan Hampton, a genuine team leader, to miss the last 12 games. The Bears were 4-0 with Hampton and 2-10 without him.

Hampton will always be welcome in Chicago. Ditka, too.

And as for McMahon . . . ?
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Mention The Bear Report!

Ditka and McMahon. They barely tolerated each other from 1982 through 1988. Last year they flopped miserably without each other.

Working for the Chicago Sun-Times, I spoke with the late George Halas the afternoon he hired Ditka in 1982. And I listened to Ditka elaborate on his hopes and dreams at a press conference the next day. I was also in Halas' downtown offices the night he and former Bear general manager Jim Finks hardballed McMahon into signing his first contract. McMahon was furious. Claimed he was underpaid.

But the more I watched McMahon on and off the field in and around Chicago, the more I came to realize that he was never happy unless he was mad about something. "Outrageous" and "punk" were the adjectives coined and most commonly used to describe McMahon's behavior. "Self-centered" and "spoiled" were the adjectives most commonly held back when the McMahon-quarterbacked Bears went 35-3 in his last 38 games with the team.

When I departed Chicago to work for the Los Angeles Times covering the Chargers in 1988, I thought I had left McMahon in my rear view mirror. Then in the summer of 1989 the Bears traded the injury-prone McMahon to the Chargers.

The Chargers were desperate for a quarterback. And in McMahon they thought they were getting a lovable desperado. Foolish them. What they got instead was a 30-year-old quarterback with a 50-year-old body and, on occasion, the mind of a two-year-old. It was not a pretty sight.

McMahon surprised nobody who had studied his history when he became the center of an injury controversy in the Chargers' first regular season game, a 40-14 loss to the hated Los Angeles Raiders. After the game Henning said he benched McMahon because he thought he was hurt. Then he said McMahon wasn't hurt. McMahon said he could have returned. But backup quarterback David Archer said McMahon had asked to come out of the game.

Does all this sound familiar?

By Week Eight McMahon had temporary-

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NFL Notebook

QB retreads not the answer

NEW ORLEANS — As usual, the Super Bowl is about quarterbacks. Football is about quarterbacks.

The 49ers are in their fourth with Joe Montana and the Broncos are in their third with John Elway.

The 49ers have great receivers and a great running back and a proven scheme, but had they stuck with Steve DeBerg back in 1981, would he have taken them to four Super Bowls?

On the other hand, take Elway off the Broncos. Gary Kubiak is a tough little competitor who has won some games, including a gutty performance on a Monday night against the Redskins in Washington. But

choice to find out what we already knew." George?

Tobin is prevented by NFL edict to discuss juniors. But mobility is a high priority among the quarterbacks Tobin likes. George doesn't run.

Dan Marino?

"The good ones aren't available."

In 1974, when Tobin was a scout for the Packers, he said they were set to make a deal for Archie Manning of the New Orleans Saints. It fell through and the Packers instead sent what they intended to pay for the fourth-year Manning to the Los Angeles

Rams for washed-up 13-year man John Hadl — two No. 1s, two No. 2s, and one No. 3 draft choices.

Hadl lasted 21 games with the Packers, threw 9 TD passes and 29 interceptions, and was sent to the Houston Oilers along with two more Packer draft choices and cornerback Ken Ellis for quarterback Lynn Dickey.

Dickey was a lot better than Hadl for six years, but the Packers were 8-8 for four of them.

Tobin also saw the Bears make a mistake when they brought in Mike Phipps in 1977. The deal not only didn't work out, it dis-

couraged them from drafting Montana in 1979.

The Rams are the all-time champions at trying to rejuvenate tired arms. They brought in Milt Plum, Hadl, Joe Namath, Bert Jones, Dan Pastorini, Steve Bartkowski and Dieter Brock.

Nine quarterbacks have come from other teams to lead new teams to the Super Bowl — Kansas City's Len Dawson, Baltimore's Earl Morrall, Minnesota's Kapp, Washington's Bill Kilmer, Joe Theismann, and Doug Williams, Denver's Craig Morton, the Raiders'

Continued Next Page

DON PIERSON



three Super Bowls?

Put Elway on half the teams in the league and they would be in the Super Bowl. Kansas City, San Diego, New Orleans, Indianapolis, Washington, Chicago.

Chicago? Maybe not with the league's 25th-ranked defense, but let's look at 1986, 1987, and 1988 when the defense was first, second, and second.

So are the Bears a quarterback away?

That's what Bill Tobin is hearing from fans and other experts.

Trade for unhappy veteran Bobby Hebert of the New Orleans Saints.

Trade for available young Steve Walsh of the Dallas Cowboys.

Make a Plan B bid for whoever shows up on the unprotected list Feb. 1 — Chuck Long, maybe.

Bring back Jim McMahon.

Draft Jeff George if he comes out.

Don't hold your breath, not so long as Bill Tobin has any say as vice-president of player personnel. And Tobin signed a four-year contract extension before this season.

"I like Jim Harbaugh and Mike Tomczak,"

Tobin said. "They will get better when our defense gets better, and the defense will get better when we get people healthy."

The Bears have a No. 1 draft choice in Harbaugh and a free agent in Tomczak, who has proven he should have been a draft choice. When Tobin hears he should add another quarterback to the list, he bristles. He downright rejects the notion that a veteran is the answer, and history is on his side.

"I'm not against bringing in a young quarterback if we like him. But history has shown that retreads are not the answer," Tobin said.

Hebert?

"Last I heard he was beaten out by a strike replacement quarterback (John Fourcade)," Tobin said.

Walsh?

"He's not as good as what we have. Harbaugh is more mobile and has a better arm. Walsh might be able to read defenses better right at first because he's had the experience. It would be a deal that would look good until you had to play him."

Long?

"In my professional opinion, we have better."

McMahon?

"It cost the Chargers a second-round draft

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Perry not the answer

To the editor,

In my opinion, most of the losses this year are because the Bears don't have a good right defensive tackle. Sure, William Perry has a few sacks, but when he's out trying to put pressure on the quarterback, Steve McMichael, the stay home man, is blocked by a center like Doug Smith of the Rams, or a guard like Paul Gruber of the Bucs. The opponents just run it up the middle. And what happens when the other guard goes after Singletary and at least blocks him until the rusher can get by him? Then there's the two other linebackers — if the rusher can get by them, Duerson has to hit him. You can tell if the Bears had a good defense against the run by how many hits Duerson had on the rusher.

What I'm saying is that the Bears need a good defensive tackle who can put pressure on the quarterback and prevent the run, because next year Singletary will be in his 10th year and Morrissey has that kidney injury. I would be surprised if he plays next year, and there's a couple good linebackers in next year's draft.

Luke Lairson
Meaford, Ontario
Canada

Poor drafts have hurt

To the editor,

In your issue dated Jan. 1, David Peterson wrote a letter concerning the Bear organization's frugality and "horrible" college drafting philosophy. This short, yet direct letter has led me to express my feelings concerning the Bears' demise.

Yes, it would be nice if Mr. McCaskey spent more on his team, ala Ed DeBartolo, Jr. of the 49ers. An indoor practice facility would be a great start. However, I can't question their initial reluctance to delve into Plan B free agency. The Bears had just come off an excellent season, had three No. 1 draft picks and a core of young players that appeared to have promise. Few of the Plan B players really made an impact on their new clubs, and many didn't even make an NFL roster.

As far as trading up for draft choices, that is much easier said than done. Who was going to deal a high draft pick to the Bears? The last thing other teams wanted was for the then talent-rich Bears to get richer. Besides, after a 1989 NFC Championship Game appearance, the Bears had the 11th and 12th picks in the draft. Can anyone expect more than that?

Mr. Peterson did hit it on the head, however, when he blasted the Bears' draft day performances between 1985 and 1988. Those drafts alone are to blame for the insipid pabulum Mike Ditka called a team in 1989. Only one player from the drafts ranging from 1985-87, Neal Anderson, has made a positive contribution to the Bear cause. William Perry has been an embarrassment, Jim Harbaugh has performed like a fifth-rounder and the middle rounds of all those drafts have produced nothing of consequence. The 1988 draft brought Brad Muster and Wendell Davis in the first round, but the rest of the draft has been a washout.

Bill Tobin deserves a pat on the back for picks like Anderson, Marshall, Dent, Bortz and even Chris Dyko. But his recent performance would not have been tolerated by an organization like the 49ers. If he fails in 1990 (the jury is still out on 1989), the Bear organization will reclaim its title as the laughing stock of professional football (circa 1969-74).

Doug Holland
Milwaukee, WI

Editor's note: You must have forgotten Kevin Butler (4th round, 1985) when you said the middle rounds of the 1985-87 drafts produced nothing of consequence. And I wouldn't agree that James Thornton (4th round, 1988) has been a washout.

Anderson for Walsh?

To the editor,

I think what we need to do is sign Neal Anderson as soon as we can, then trade him, with a draft choice if necessary, for Steve Walsh. I love Neal Anderson. He's a great ballplayer who is going to get greater. But we need a quarterback who can take us to the Super Bowl.

Tomczak is a tough kid, but in no way a

gifted quarterback. He won't get much better and he'll never be good enough. Harbaugh may be a slow comer and will get better as he learns to read defenses, and think pass rather than run. But we can't rely on him.

Walsh may be a star who could be with the Bears for 10 years. Better he be great in Chicago than in Minnesota. We need to move quickly to get this done. Dallas needs a running back and we need Steve Walsh.

Rick Wallace
Beverly Hills, CA

Where's Chambers?

To the editor,

The New York Jets fired Joe Walton and the entire coaching staff. This included an ex-Bear, Wally Chambers. Do you know if another team picked up Wally, or is he out of football for the moment?

S.E. Howe
Andover, NY

Editor's note: As of this writing, no team has picked up Chambers yet.

Look at defense during draft

To the editor,

In the first four games the Bears destroyed all the opponents and were said to be on their way to the Super Bowl. But when Dan Hampton and Jim Morrissey left, the Bear defense fell apart on the run. Which means the first two draft picks should be an outside linebacker and definitely a defensive tackle (maybe two, if Hampton and McMichael retire next year).

If I was Mike Ditka, I would start Jim Harbaugh over Mike Tomczak. Although he does throw too many interceptions, Harbaugh completed 62 percent of his passes. But as far as everything else goes, if Ditka does what I feel is right the Bears will be back next year for Super Bowl XXV.

Gus Thermonos
Short Hills, NJ

Take some ideas from 49ers

To the editor,

Once again the football team of the '80s, the San Francisco 49ers, appear to have purchased another Super Bowl championship through Plan B and elsewhere. It's amazing what money can do for you in professional sports. Someone pointed out that there are only seven or eight professional football team owners that earn a true living off of their team.

The 49ers aren't one of them. The Bears are. Thus comes the reality of having to build a team through the draft, where players generally come more cheaply. That can't be changed, and Joe Montanas are few and far between.

The '85 Bears won through a combination of youth and team spirit that will be hard to duplicate with any consistency. So we should stop expecting it. However, maybe we can regain that level of success by taking a page or two from the 49ers' playbook.

1, If you're going to live and die with the draft, then focus all efforts to ensure you are successful in drafting known and unknown talent. Poor drafts will kill you.

2, You need a coaching staff committed to excellence and the elimination of mistakes. If nothing else, the 49ers do execute, especially their first 18-20 offensive plays each game, to test the other team. They don't miss assignments and they don't drop

passes. The elimination of mistakes can make up for a lack of pure talent in most instances.

You need proper facilities for week-to-week training and game preparation that are first rate. And a new and larger stadium to help pay for the talent you must retain to be successful, as player salaries are not going down in the near future.

J.M. Lukanick
Bloomington, MN

Poor drafts have hurt

To the editor,

Even a blind man should be able to see what's gone wrong with the Bears in 1989. The Bears entered the 1989 season with not one, but two sets of players:

1, Those good-to-great players still left over from the great team they had assembled prior to the 1985 Super Bowl season (namely, an excellent, but aging, offensive line, and Hampton, Singletary, McMichael, Duerson and Dent).

2, All the other players added since the 1985 college draft, who, with the exception of Neal Anderson (a truly excellent football player) are as a whole less talented than the pre-1985 group.

Thus, the reason for the Bears' decline in 1989 has been the series of three or four bad college drafts they strung together, roughly 1985-87 or 1988. Indicative of just how poor the Bears' drafts have been over the period is the fact that their best players heading into 1985 were mostly their best players heading into 1989.

The personnel department at Halas Hall put together a great collection of talent by 1985, then went into hibernation. While other teams were improving their talent over the past four seasons, the Bears were depleting theirs. Now the Bears are getting out-everythinged by teams they used to whip. The reason is obvious and cannot be remedied in the near future.

Conan McDonald
Noblesville, IN

Reader understands Ditka

To the editor,

Finally, I understand why Mike Ditka is disgusted with the fans. I just opened up my Bear Report for the week of Dec. 25, 1989 and proceeded to read this week's "Viewpoint."

You so-called fans think it's wrong for Mike Ditka to yell at his team, but then you turn right around and do the same thing. Three of the six writers criticized the team and Mike.

Then to top that off, I listened to the sportswriters after the Bear-Packer game, and one of them repeatedly said that none of the success in recent years should belong to Mike Ditka. He even said that the Bears would be better off without him.

Give they guy a break. He's tried everything. Think back to weeks one through four. Everything he said was full of praise for the players. Then when they were down, he attempted to motivate them by telling them they stink.

At the time he thought it would help. Later on he even took the blame. Among other things, he benched players and even tried a little play-calling himself. Remember, he's not the one with the shoulder pads on. I think people should just give him credit as a coach. Try to put yourself in his spot. What would you do?

Jim D. Korbecki
Muskegan, MI

Pierson

Continued From Page 17

ers' Jim Plunkett, and Philadelphia's Ron Jaworski. All but Williams started their careers before there were 28 teams.

There are no Norm Van Brocklins available from the Rams anymore. He went to the Philadelphia Eagles in 1958 when the Eagles already had a young Sonny Jurgensen but decided they couldn't wait. There are no Jurgensens available in trade for Norm Snead. There are no Y.A. Tittles available for the New York Giants to take from the San Francisco 49ers, Steve Young included.

"You name a team and then name the one quarterback most associated with that team," Tobin said. "Almost all of them will be quarterbacks drafted or developed by that team."

Going by yards passing, here are the leaders: Falcons — Steve Bartkowski, Bears — Sid Luckman, Cowboys — Roger Staubach, Lions — Bobby Layne, Packers — Bart Starr, Rams — Roman Gabriel, Vikings — Fran Tarkenton, Saints — Archie Manning, Giants — Phil Simms, Eagles — Ron Jaworski, Cardinals — Jim Hart, 49ers — John Brodie, Buccaneers — Doug Williams, Redskins — Joe Theismann, Bills — Joe Ferguson, Bengals — Ken Anderson, Browns — Brian Sipe, Broncos — John Elway, Oilers

— George Blanda, Colts — Johnny Unitas, Chiefs — Len Dawson, Raiders — Ken Stabler, Dolphins — Bob Griese, Patriots — Steve Grogan, Jets — Joe Namath, Steelers — Terry Bradshaw, Chargers — Dan Fouts, Seahawks — Dave Krieg.

Layne played a year with the Bears and a year with the New York Bulldogs before going to Detroit. Jaworski played sparingly with the Rams for his first three years. Theismann was drafted by Miami and played three years in Canada. Blanda played his first nine years with the Bears, but not as the regular quarterback. Unitas was cut from the Steelers' camp before going to Baltimore. Dawson was drafted by the Steelers and played sparingly for five years with the Steelers and Browns. Elway was drafted by the Colts and traded a week later. All seven of them got their first big chance with the teams they eventually led. None were retreads.

The other 21 were either drafted or signed as free agents by the teams that developed them and benefitted.

So send the Bears all the advice you want, but expect them to play with somebody they draft or develop themselves, and figure those players are already on the team. Or hope Tobin changes his philosophy.

Now if Montana or Elway aren't doing anything after the Super Bowl...

Continued Page 19

Bears' final season statistics

	Bears	Opp.
TOTAL FIRST DOWNS	302	332
Rushing	136	118
Passing	147	191
Penalty	19	23
3rd Down: Made/Att.	94/214	84/206
3rd Down Pct.	43.9	40.8
4th Down: Made/Att.	10/18	7/15
4th Down Pct.	55.6	46.7
POSSESSION AVG.	31:11	28:49
TOTAL NET YARDS	5375	5729
Avg. Per Game	335.9	358.1
Total Plays	1028	1039
Avg. Per Play	5.2	5.5
NET YARDS RUSHING	2287	1897
Avg. Per Game	142.9	118.6
Total Rushes	516	446
NET YARDS PASSING	3088	3832
Avg. Per Game	193.0	239.5
Tackled/Yards Lost	28/174	39/247
Gross Yards	3262	4079
Att./Completions	484/267	554/307
Completion Pct.	55.2	55.4
Had Intercepted	25	26
PUNTS/AVERAGE	72/39.5	67/39.6
NET PUNTING AVG.	33.4	34.6
PENALTIES/YARDS	95/846	95/802
FUMBLES/BALL LOST	23/17	24/12
TOUCHDOWNS	45	43
Rushing	22	21
Passing	21	21
Returns	2	1

SCORE BY PERIODS	1	2	3	4	OT	Total
BEARS	40	108	82	128	0	358
OPPONENTS	69	111	72	125	0	377

SCORING	TD-Ru	Pa	Rt	PAT	FG	S	TP
Anderson	11	4	0	0/0	0/0	0	90
Butler	0	0	0	43/45	15/19	0	88
Muster	5	3	0	0/0	0/0	0	48
Davis	0	3	0	0/0	0/0	0	18
Harbaugh	3	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	18
McKinnon	0	3	0	0/0	0/0	0	18
Thornton	0	3	0	0/0	0/0	0	18
Sanders	0	1	1	0/0	0/0	0	12
Suhey	1	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	12
Boso	0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Gentry	0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Green	1	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Morris	0	1	0	0/0	0/0	0	6
Stinson	0	0	1	0/0	0/0	0	6
Tomczak	1	0	0	0/0	0/0	0	6

BEARS	22	21	2	43/45	15/19	0	358
OPPONENTS	21	21	1	41/43	26/36	0	377
SACKS: Dent 8.0, McMichael 7.5, Armstrong 5.0, Roper 4.5, Perry 4.0, Chapura 3.0, Hampton 2.0, Rivera 2.0, Singletary 1.0, Woods 1.0, BEARS 39.0, OPPONENTS 28.0.							

RUSHING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Anderson	274	1275	4.7	73	11
Muster	82	327	4.0	20	5
Harbaugh	45	276	6.1	126	3
Sanders	41	127	3.1	19	0
Gentry	17	106	6.2	29	0
Tomczak	24	71	3.0	18	1
Suhey	20	51	2.6	8	1
Green	5	46	9.2	137	1
Taylor	2	7	3.5	7	0
Buford	1	6	6.0	6	0
McKinnon	3	5	1.7	3	0
Thornton	1	4	4.0	4	0
Morris	1	-14	-14.0	-14	0
BEARS	516	2287	4.4	73	22
OPPONENTS	446	1897	4.3	168	21

RECEIVING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Anderson	50	434	8.7	149	4
Gentry	39	463	11.9	179	1
Muster	32	259	8.1	25	3
Morris	30	486	16.2	158	1
McKinnon	28	418	14.9	41	3
Davis	26	397	15.3	152	3
Thornton	24	392	16.3	136	3
Boso	17	182	10.7	43	1
Suhey	9	73	8.1	22	1
Green	5	48	9.6	21	0
Kozlowski	3	74	24.7	55	0
Sanders	3	28	9.3	116	1
Waddle	1	8	8.0	8	0
BEARS	267	3262	12.2	179	21
OPPONENTS	307	4079	13.3	197	21

INTERCEPTIONS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Stinson	4	59	14.8	129	1
Lynch	3	55	18.3	41	0
Gayle	3	39	13.0	20	0
Woolford	3	0	0.0	0	0
Roper	2	46	23.0	43	0

PASSING	Att.	Cmp.	Yds.	Cmp.%	Yds./Att.	TD	TD%	Int.	Int.%	Long	Sack/Lost	Rating
Tomczak	306	156	2058	51.0	6.73	16	5.2	16	5.2	179	10/68	68.2
Harbaugh	178	111	1204	62.4	6.76	5	2.8	9	5.1	149	18/106	70.5
BEARS	484	267	3262	55.2	6.74	21	4.3	25	5.2	179	28/174	69.1
OPPONENTS	554	307	4079	55.4	7.36	21	3.8	26	4.7	197	39/247	72.0

Jackson	2	16	8.0	16	0
Rivera	2	1	0.5	1	0
Morrissey	2	0	0.0	0	0
Dent	1	30	30.0	30	0
Paul	1	20	20.0	20	0
Duerson	1	2	2.0	2	0
Douglass	1	0	0.0	0	0
Tate	1	0	0.0	0	0
BEARS	26	268	10.3	43	1
OPPONENTS	25	182	7.3	53	1

PUNTING	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Net	TB	In	Lg	B
Buford	72	2844	39.5	33.4	9	21	60	0
BEARS	72	2844	39.5	33.4	9	21	60	0
OPPONENTS	67	2655	39.6	34.6	6	15	63	0

PUNT RETURNS	Ret	FC	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Green	16	5	141	8.8	24	0
McKinnon	10	3	67	6.7	17	0
Kozlowski	4	0	-2	-0.5	4	0
Waddle	1	0	2	2.0	2	0
Woolford	1	0	12	12.0	12	0
BEARS	32	8	220	6.9	24	0
OPPONENTS	30	5	262	8.7	34	0

KICKOFF RETURNS	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Long	TD
Gentry	28	667	23.8	63	0
Sanders	23	491	21.3	196	1
Green	11	239	21.7	37	0
Suhey	6	93	15.5	21	0
Pruitt	2	17	8.5	11	0
Chapura	1	8	8.0	8	0
Kozlowski	1	12	12.0	12	0
Tate	1	12	12.0	12	0
BEARS	73	1539	21.1	196	1
OPPONENTS	68	1375	20.2	62	0

FIELD GOALS	1-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+
Butler	0/0	6/6	6/7	3/5	0/1
OPPONENTS	3/3	11/11	3/6	8/13	1/3
Butler: (29G) (40G) (21G, 22G, 25G, 32G) () () () (35G, 46G) (25G, 37G) (39G, 35G) (40G) () (33G, 44N) (22G, 43N, 37N) () (50N)					
OPPONENTS: (45N) (33N, 34N) (40G, 48G) (47G, 45N, 19G) () (27G, 42N, 19G) (31G, 35G) (45G) () (39N, 45N), (26G, 22G, 52N, 29G, 28G), (40N, 55N, 28G), (51G, 45G), (45G, 28G) (19G, 44G, 23G, 21G), (29G, 24G, 36G, 47G)					

Letters

Continued From Page 18

Experience will help in future

To the editor,

This year is a year the Bears would rather forget. The Bears just did not have it this year. One bright spot of the Bears' season is that the rookies got very much playing time. That will help out a lot in the future. It's important that the Bear fans don't get down on the Bears.

This season reminded me a lot of their '84 season, a lot of young players and some good veterans.

I would also like to say thanks to the *Bear Report* for updating us on Bears' information.

P.S. — Do any Bear fans know how I can get any of the Bears' "starting lineup" figures?

Kevin McAllister
1884 Evangeline
Dearborn Heights, MI 48127

Keep the faith

To the editor,

The Bears didn't make it to the playoffs or the Super Bowl, but there is always next year. I don't blame the Bears for not making it to the playoffs. I blame Mike Ditka, because he said that the Bears were atrocious. And if a coach says that about a team, then the team isn't going to play well.

I still have faith in the Bears, and to me the Bears will always be the best team in football. I think that Bear fans should support their team and have faith in them.

I was also wondering if there was a way I could get individual color photos of the Bears, because I would love to have a photo of Neal Anderson. I also wanted to thank the *Bear Report* for putting my letter in your newspaper. I love the *Bear Report*, and when my subscription runs out I shall renew it. Go Bears.

Brigitte Robinson
Hollywood, FL

Editor's note — For photos of Bear players, try writing to the Bears' public relations department at: 250 N. Washington Rd., Lake Forest, IL 60045.

Trade Anderson, Tomczak

To the editor,

First of all, I would like to thank Mike Ditka for all of the thrills he has given me as a player and coach. I would like to suggest that the Bears use Neal Anderson and Mike Tomczak as trade bait to try to get New Orleans quarterback Bobby Herbert.

Anderson is a great running back, but you have to have something to get something. Tomczak is not the answer for the Bears, but may fill in as a backup.

The Bears cannot win with just a great running back. Harbaugh still has to learn, so why not from Herbert? I'm not a fair-weather fan, as I lived in Chicago for 62 years and now live in Lake Havasu City, Ariz. I rent a satellite dish so I can see every game. I wish

Mike and the Bears all the best and hope they get an outstanding quarterback. Also, I would like to see Mike as coach for a while yet.

Al Coley
Lake Havasu City, AZ

Wants Super Bowl tape

To the editor,

I would like to ask my fellow Bear fans if anyone has a Super Bowl game tape of 1986 between the Bears and New England. I will be happy to pay a reasonable price. I'll be glad to hear from all you Bear fans.

Abdul Razzaq
P.O. Box 130
Colonia, NJ 07067

To the editor,

I'm looking for videotapes of the Bears' two playoff games in 1985 when they shut out the Giants and Rams. If anybody has these tapes, please contact me.

I'm also looking for Mike Singletary's MVP poster from Sears in Chicago.

Steven Flores
P.O. Box 307
Martindale, TX 78655

To the editor,

I have been looking for a VCR tape of Super Bowl XX and have been unable to find

one. If you have one I will be willing to send the tape and to pay a reasonable price for it. I am also looking for a tape of the last game that Jim McMahon was quarterback for the Bears on Aug. 14, 1989. I would really appreciate it if someone has one of these tapes, they would let me know.

Susan Cobb
241 Tombfield Rd.
Camden, SC 29020

To the editor,

Fellow Bear fans, I'm in need of the following Bear items:

1, A VHS copy of Super Bowl XX.
2, A copy of the book, "Sweetness."
I will pay anybody reasonable prices for these. Please help.

Kevin McAllister
1884 Evangeline
Dearborn Heights, MI 48127

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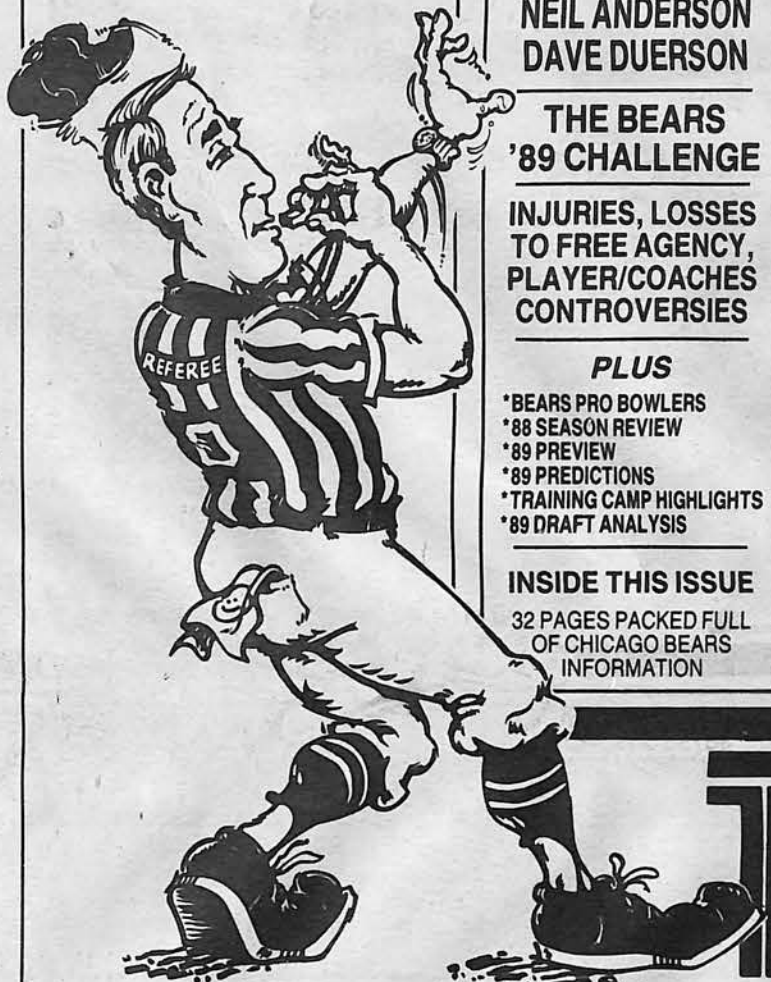
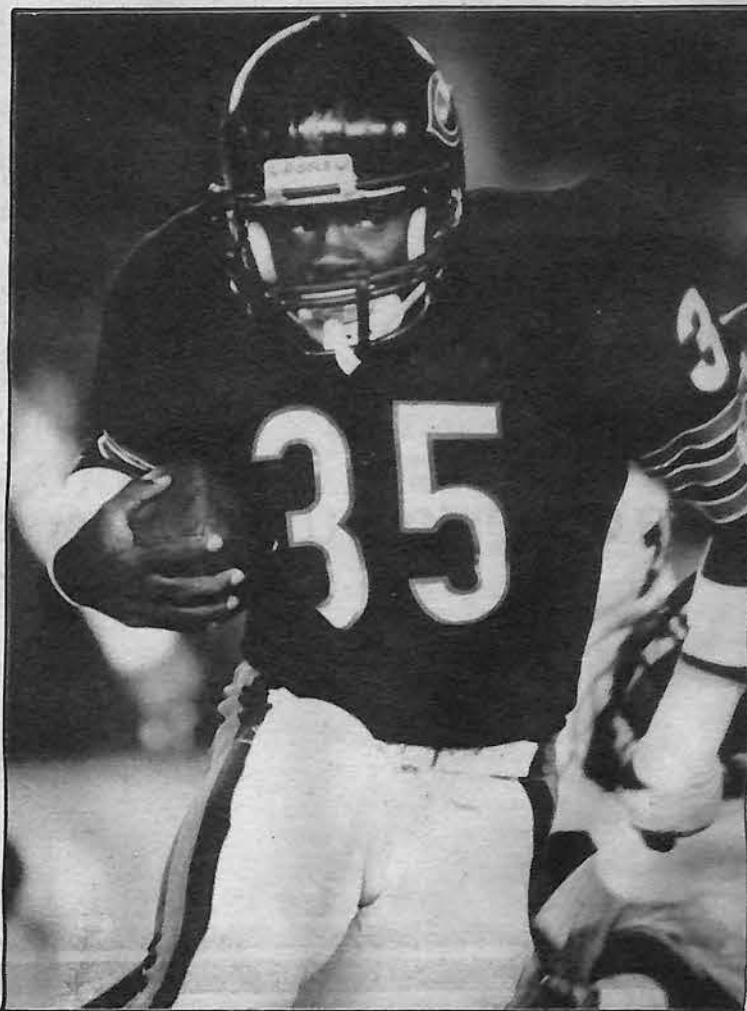
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32 PAGES PACKED FULL
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We all know Coach Ditka was unhappy with the ending of the past three seasons and that he won't be happy until the Bears return to the Super Bowl to battle for the World Championship.

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